

Lifting the lid on Bluetown: a replication case study, which investigates the contribution of engagement in a local criminal network to young people's more serious and persistent offending patterns

Eoin O'Meara Daly, Sean Redmond, Catherine M. Naughton

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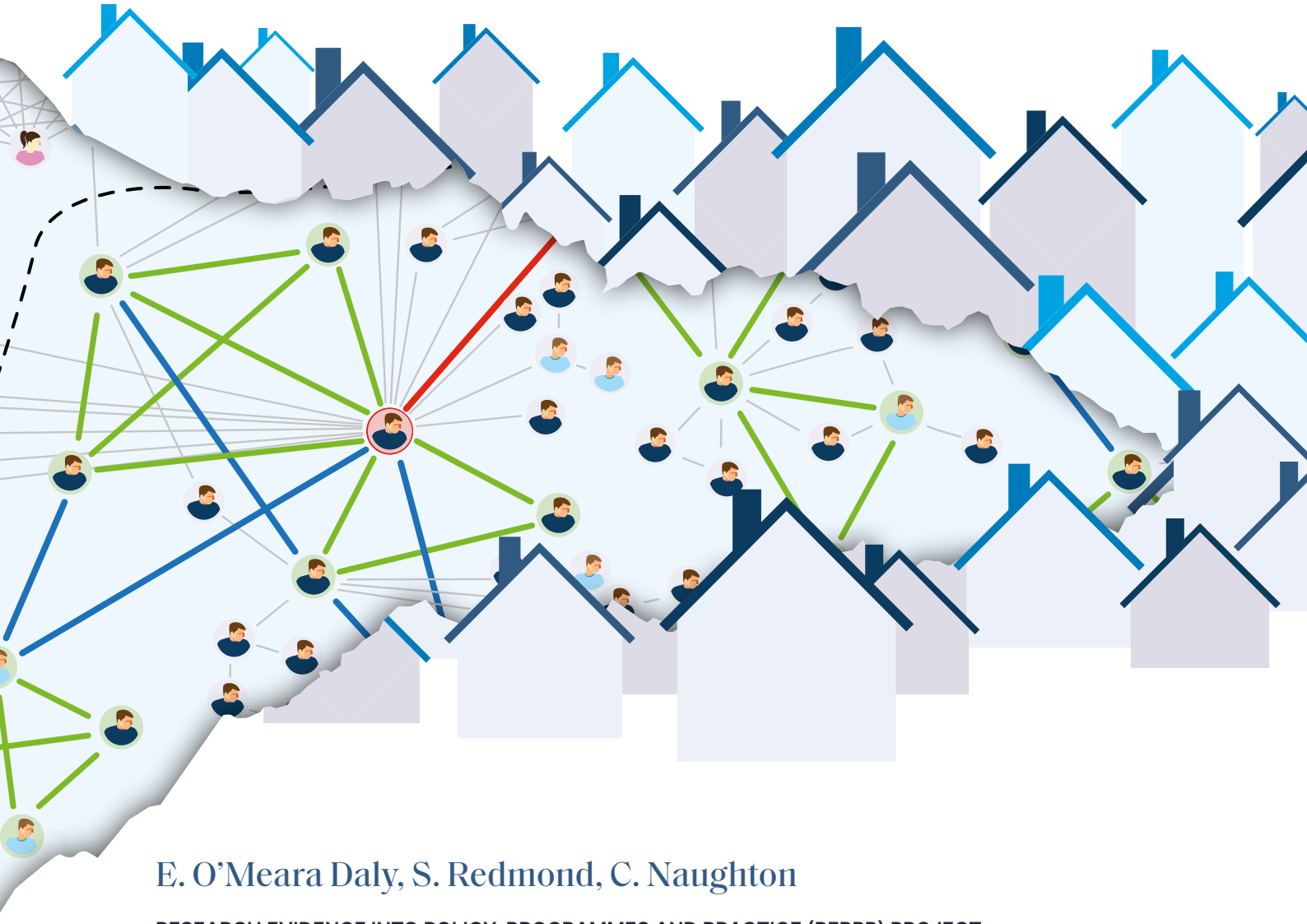
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Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

A replication case study, which investigates the contribution of engagement in a local criminal network to young people's more serious and persistent offending patterns



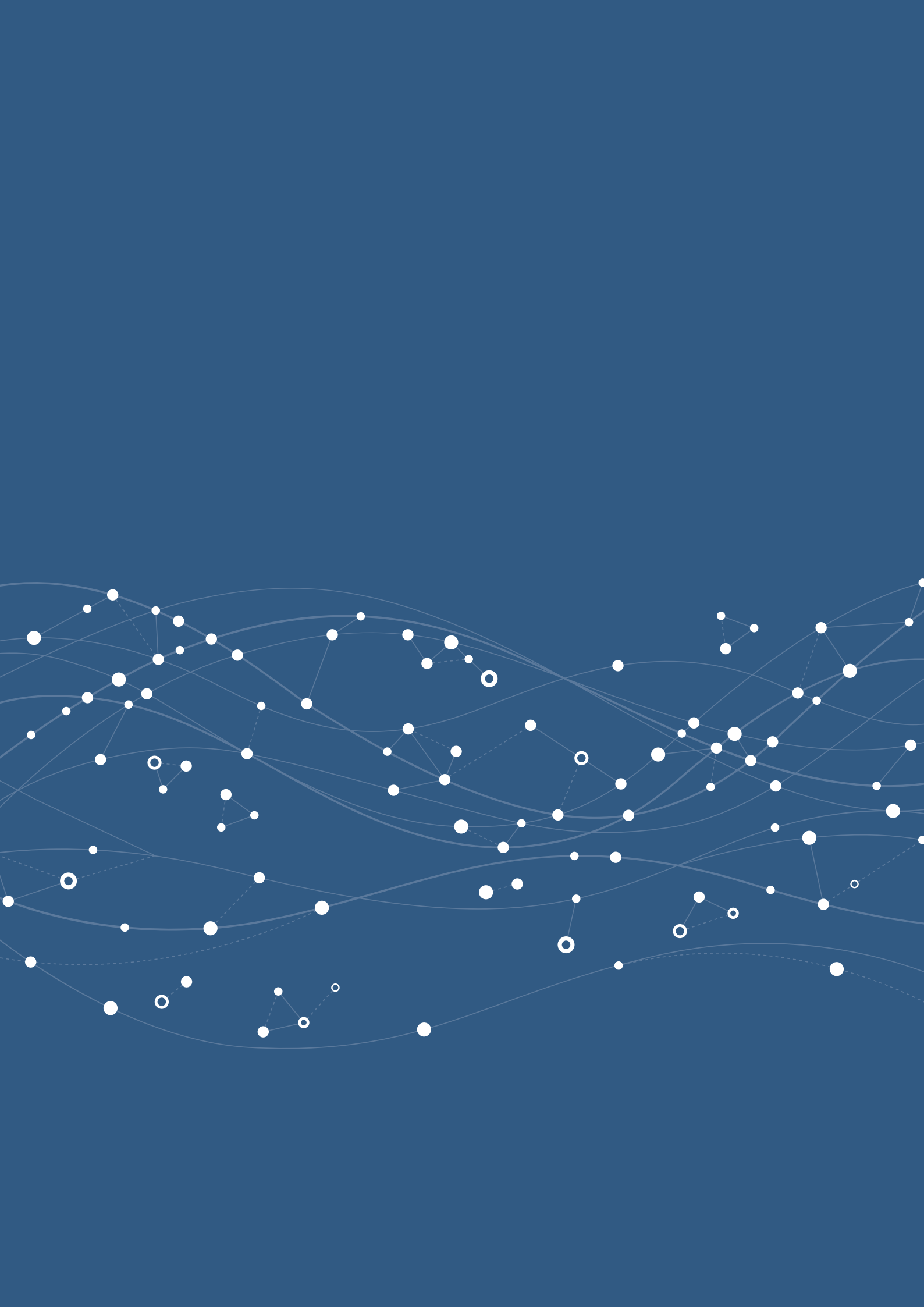
E. O'Meara Daly, S. Redmond, C. Naughton

RESEARCH EVIDENCE INTO POLICY, PROGRAMMES AND PRACTICE (REPPP) PROJECT
School of Law, University of Limerick

An Roinn Leanaí agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of Children and Youth Affairs

RESEARCH EVIDENCE INTO POLICY PROGRAMMES AND PRACTICE
YOUTH CRIME

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais
Department of Justice and Equality



Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

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The authors are responsible for the views, opinions, findings, conclusions and/or any recommendations expressed in the report.

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Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

Researchers



Eoin O'Meara Daly is a Research Fellow in Youth Justice on the REPPP Project. Eoin was the lead researcher on the Bluetown study.



Dr Sean Redmond is Principal Investigator for the Greentown studies. Sean is a civil servant from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs on assignment to the University of Limerick.



Dr Catherine Naughton is a Research Psychologist on the REPPP project. Catherine was lead researcher for the Redtown and National Prevalence Report.

Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

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Mr Eoin O'Meara Daly, **Prof. Sean Redmond**, **Dr Catherine Naughton**.

REPPP (Research Evidence into Policy, Programmes and Practice)
School of Law

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Executive Summary

The Bluetown study aimed to replicate the Greentown study. The Greentown study was innovative in methodology and purpose. It examined the context of the minority of young people in Ireland who engaged in 'atypical' crimes (burglary and drugs for sale and supply), where criminal activity tended to be more serious and prolific. It identified the presence of a local criminal network and found that engagement in the network was plausibly associated with repeat offending. Two replication case studies, Bluetown and Redtown, aimed to examine if the Greentown findings resonated in other locations in Ireland. The current study aimed to identify if the Greentown findings could be generalised to another anonymised Garda sub-district, Bluetown.

The Twinsight methodology

Redmond (2016) specifically designed the Twinsight methodology for the Greentown study. In Greentown, local criminal network maps constructed from PULSE crime data illustrated crime transactions (focusing on burglary and drugs for sale or supply) including transactions between adults and young people. Similarly, criminal network maps were constructed for Bluetown during the period of 2014–2015. The network map provided a framework to harness the expert knowledge of members of An Garda Síochána in Bluetown and facilitated confidential discussions around key incidents, young people's contexts and relationships.

Key findings

Garda narratives centred on four area-based criminal networks that existed in Bluetown. These were distinct from each other and spread over a large geographical area. Network 1 was family based and hierarchical in nature, with Networks 2 and 3 grounded in peer relationships and their locality. Garda respondents described Network 4 as a drugs network with a loose organisational structure. According to Gardaí, all four networks in Bluetown contained relationships with different levels of trust between members and this affected network strength and stability. Criminal network strength and stability was also influenced by fear and intimidation. Similar to Greentown, each network contained members with family connections to crime and involved young people with a combination of risk factors. In Bluetown, proximity to offending peers and the normalisation of criminal behaviour were additional factors with networks developing in localities for sustained periods.

Conclusion

There was sufficient consistency between the original Greentown findings and the replication study in Bluetown: notably regarding Network 1 and its family orientation, in addition to the chaotic backgrounds of young people in problematic peer groups. One difference between Greentown and Bluetown was that the latter represented a large urban sub-district with four distinct criminal networks identified by Garda respondents on the criminal network map. As a result, some Garda respondents were limited in their knowledge of all areas on the PULSE informed map. In Greentown we identified that engagement in local criminal networks contributed to young people developing more serious and prolific crime trajectories. Likewise, in Bluetown the findings suggest that engagement in networks contributed to a significant number of young people developing more serious and prolific offending patterns. The combination of Bluetown and Greentown findings indicates that the structure and dynamics of networks may be context-specific. Both sets of findings suggest that engagement in a local criminal network may have contributed to the young people's 'atypical' criminal activity.

Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

Introduction

Background

The original Greentown study (Redmond, 2016) provided evidence for the existence of criminal networks in Ireland and their use of children in criminal enterprise. This study was distinctive in examining the factors that influence the criminal trajectories of children who are involved in multiple serious offences.[1] The Garda Analysis Service constructed a criminal network based on police activity data (PULSE[2]) for a Garda sub-district anonymised as 'Greentown'. Redmond (2016) used this network as a framework for interviews with individual frontline members of An Garda Síochána.[3] The findings provided evidence that suggested that a criminal network was operating in Greentown. This network played a role in sustaining high levels of serious criminal activity among children. The original study revealed five key findings:

1. A criminal network existed and contained key network actors
2. The network was hierarchical in nature
3. Powerful processes and a sympathetic embedded culture supported the hierarchical structure
4. Power and influence were mediated by geography, obligation and the intensity of the relationships with patrons
5. The network compelled some children in the area into abnormal patterns of offending behaviour.

Our subsequent research investigated the generalisability of these findings. First, we conducted a national survey of Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers (Naughton and Redmond, 2017).[4] Findings suggest that up to 1,000 children in Ireland may be engaged within local criminal networks.

We then conducted two replication case studies in new locations, anonymised as 'Redtown' and 'Bluetown'. The current report focuses on the Bluetown replication case study. The replication studies aimed to test the Twinsight[5] methodology and establish if there was resonance between the original Greentown findings and the new locations.

Using the same methodological approach as the Greentown report, the Garda Analysis Service constructed a Bluetown network map based on co-offending relationships (burglary and drugs offences) from PULSE data (2014–2015) for the Bluetown Garda sub-district. The original Greentown study provided evidence of the existence of a criminal network in Greentown. Therefore, we took the presence of a criminal network in Bluetown (not its structure or dynamics) as a starting point for the current study. To note, all findings presented are based on the perspectives of the Garda respondents.

[1] Burglary and drugs for sale or supply offences are atypical crimes for young people in Ireland; they also often need adult collusion for their operation.
[2] Police Using Leading Systems Effectively, a crime detection recording software.
[3] National Police Force in the Republic of Ireland.
[4] Findings support the original Greentown study, with similar children's profiles seeming to fit a minority (1 in 8) of the children involved in the diversion system across the country (approx. 1,000 children). This was not confined to large urban areas.
[5] Redmond (2016) developed Twinsight methodology specifically for the Greentown study. We describe Twinsight in detail in Appendix 1.

Chapter 1 of *Lifting the lid on Greentown* (Redmond, 2016) presented a review of the existing literature, outlining the strengths and limitations of existing mainstream scientific knowledge on youth crime, followed by a more specific review of the literature relating to networks and crime.

Previous research that informs our understanding of the dynamics of criminal networks tends to focus on social network analysis (for example, see Morselli, 2013), while investigations of factors that influence young people's offending behaviour tend to focus on an individual level of analysis (for example, see Wasserman et al., 2003). The original Greentown study was innovative in that it provided a confidential method to capture the expert knowledge of a local police force. Findings suggest a need to undertake a network level of analysis if we are to gain a better understanding of the factors that influence young people's offending patterns. Next, we discuss the value of undertaking replication studies.

Importance of replication

Yin (2009) identified case studies as the preferred method to address the 'how' questions, which are key to understanding real-life context and contemporary phenomena. Misco (2007) suggests that case studies and qualitative research in general can inform higher-level concepts and theory. However, as case studies are context-specific, they are limited in their ability to infer generalisability beyond the original case location.[6] There is however a growing recognition of the need to address generalisation to ensure that the findings from qualitative research can be considered a significant source of evidence to inform policy development (Polit and Beck, 2010). Yin (2009) suggests the replication of studies in additional locations as a viable means to test theory.

Replications of qualitative studies are sparse within the literature (for an exception see Wright and Patrick, 2019) and have received some critique (for example, see Fleetwood and Hesketh, 2006; Watkin, 2012). However, Melhuish and Thanheiser (2018) suggest that replication studies are an essential element of empirical research. Yin (2009) suggests that replications (multiple experiments) are essential to ensure robust quantitative (experimental) research. Likewise, Yin suggests that the replication of qualitative methodology in distinct locations facilitates the development of a rich theoretical framework. The Bluetown replication study therefore aimed to examine the theory developed from the Greentown findings that young people's engagement in a local criminal network may have played a role in their involvement in more serious and prolific crime.

Before commencement of the research, the study received ethical approval by the AHSS[7] Research Ethics Committee.

[6] The ability to infer that findings in one context are applicable to other contexts; this is essential to the concept of evidence-based practice and informing interventions for those outside the context studied.
[7] Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science, University of Limerick.

Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

Methodology

The detailed methodology is given in Appendix 1 and can be referred to at the reader's discretion. Here we present an overview of the methodology and outline the aims of the research.

2.1 Overview of methodology

1. Bluetown is one of two replication case studies.
2. An Garda Síochána Analysis Service[8] ranked all Garda sub-districts based on the detection of burglary and drugs for sale and supply offences committed by young people under the age of 18 years during 2014–2015.[9,10]
3. Our decision to select Bluetown as a case study location was in part informed by its first-place position in this ranking list.
4. An Garda Síochána Analysis Service constructed the Bluetown network map based on PULSE data of burglary, drugs for sale and supply, robbery and intelligence links in the area in 2014–2015.
5. We used the Twinsight methodology to facilitate confidential and anonymous interviews with Garda respondents based on this network map.[11]
6. Respondent-led interviews centred on the individual network members, their contexts and the dynamics between them and the wider community, and sought to ground opinion in specific events.
7. We transcribed audio-recorded interviews verbatim, imported them into NVivo software[12] and coded and analysed these data in order to develop individual case profiles, patterns and themes.
8. We used two quantitative diagnostic tools to identify which network members the respondents felt were significant to the network.
9. We developed individual case profiles of significant members. These provided an overview of individual members' contexts.
10. Themes provided a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the network's operation.

[8] An Garda Síochána Analysis Service is responsible for providing nationwide analytical support to the Gardaí and is located in Garda headquarters.
[9] The sampling technique adopted is based on the theory that burglary and drugs for sale and supply are both atypical crimes for young people and are likely to require adult involvement.
[10] As recorded in PULSE (Police Using Leading Systems Effectively), An Garda Síochána's IT system used to record crime-related incidents and intelligence reports.
[11] As outlined in detail in the original Greentown study.
[12] NVivo Pro is a computer assisted/aided qualitative data analysis program.

2.2 Aims of the Bluetown Study

The Bluetown replication case study aimed to identify factors that may influence young people's engagement and retention within a criminal network, and how these may influence their crime trajectories.

Research Questions

- From the Garda respondents' perspective, what are the factors that influence young people's engagement and retention within the Bluetown criminal network?
- How do members of An Garda Síochána portray the influence of engagement in the Bluetown network on young people's patterns of crime?

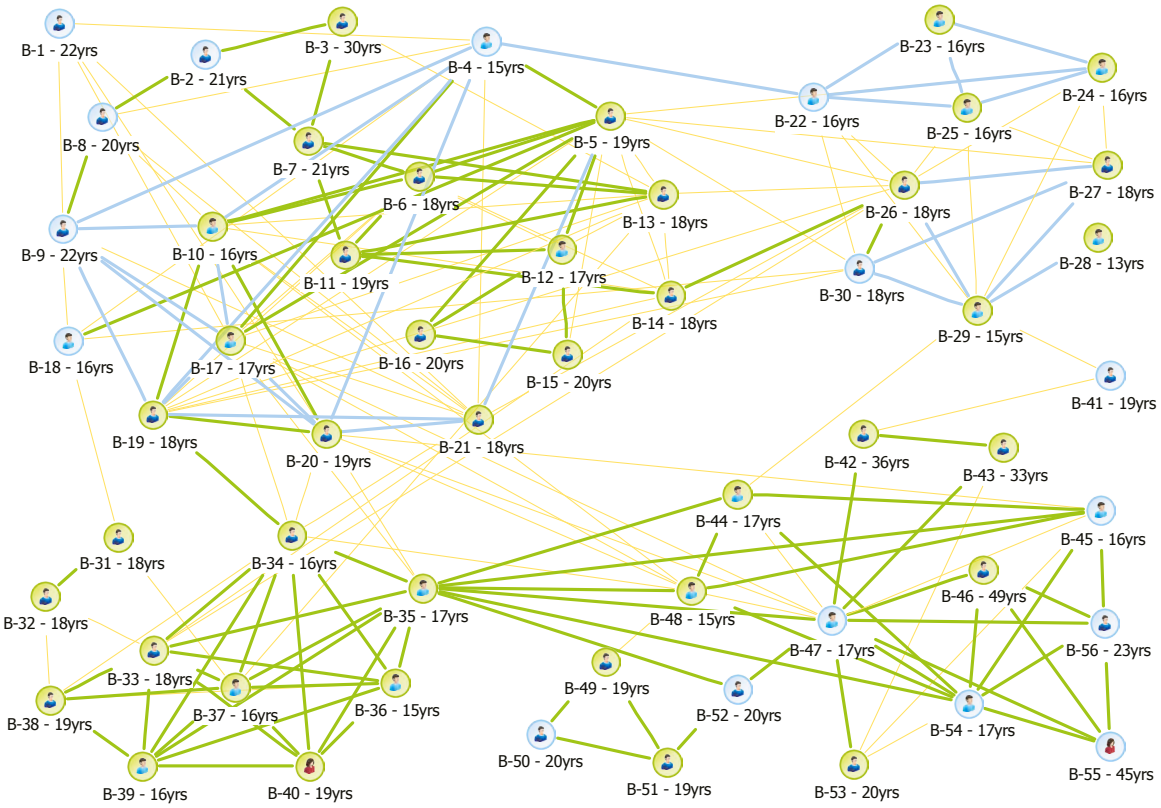


Figure 1: Original Bluetown map

Results

Key findings

We based all presented findings on Garda respondents' perspectives. Analysis of the interview data identified three findings.

Finding 1
Four area-based criminal networks existed in Bluetown that were distinct from each other.

Finding 2
A combination of risk factors was linked to young people developing more serious and prolific offending patterns across all networks.

Finding 3
Criminal network strength and stability was enhanced by the quality of 'trust' in relationships between members and influenced by fear and intimidation.

Introduction

In this chapter, we present the findings from the Bluetown replication case study. The data analysis resulted in three overarching findings.[13] All findings were grounded in Garda narratives and based predominantly on their relevance to the research questions. The overall research aim was to identify the factors that influenced young people's engagement and retention within the criminal network and to examine how engagement in the network influenced young people's crime trajectories.

3.1 Finding 1

Four area-based criminal networks existed in Bluetown that were distinct from each other

Based on case profile analysis, this section focuses on the network map provided by the Garda Analysis Service and explains the representation of four distinct geographical areas of Bluetown. In three of these areas, four criminal networks were in operation, each of which involved adults and children engaged in offending together. The fourth area, another distinct geographical location, contained some individuals that, according to Gardaí, were no longer involved in serious crime and not labelled as a criminal network for the purpose of this research.

[13] See Table 14 in Appendix 2 for a list of categories and number of coded references.

3.1.1 Adapting the Bluetown criminal network map

The original map, as presented in Figure 1, was provided by the Garda Analysis Service and constructed based on co-offending relationships (burglary and drugs sale and supply) and intelligence links from the PULSE data (2014–2015).

Based on the analysis, we adapted the original map to indicate key distinctions between areas and networks as disclosed by Garda narratives. In Figure 2 the areas and networks have been highlighted with four distinct geographical zones circled in blue and labelled Area A, B, C, D and the networks operating in each coloured as follows:

Network 1 (Area A) = Black
Network 2 (Area B) = Orange
Network 3 (Area B) = Purple
Network 4 (Area C) = Red
Area D: No criminal network identified by Gardaí

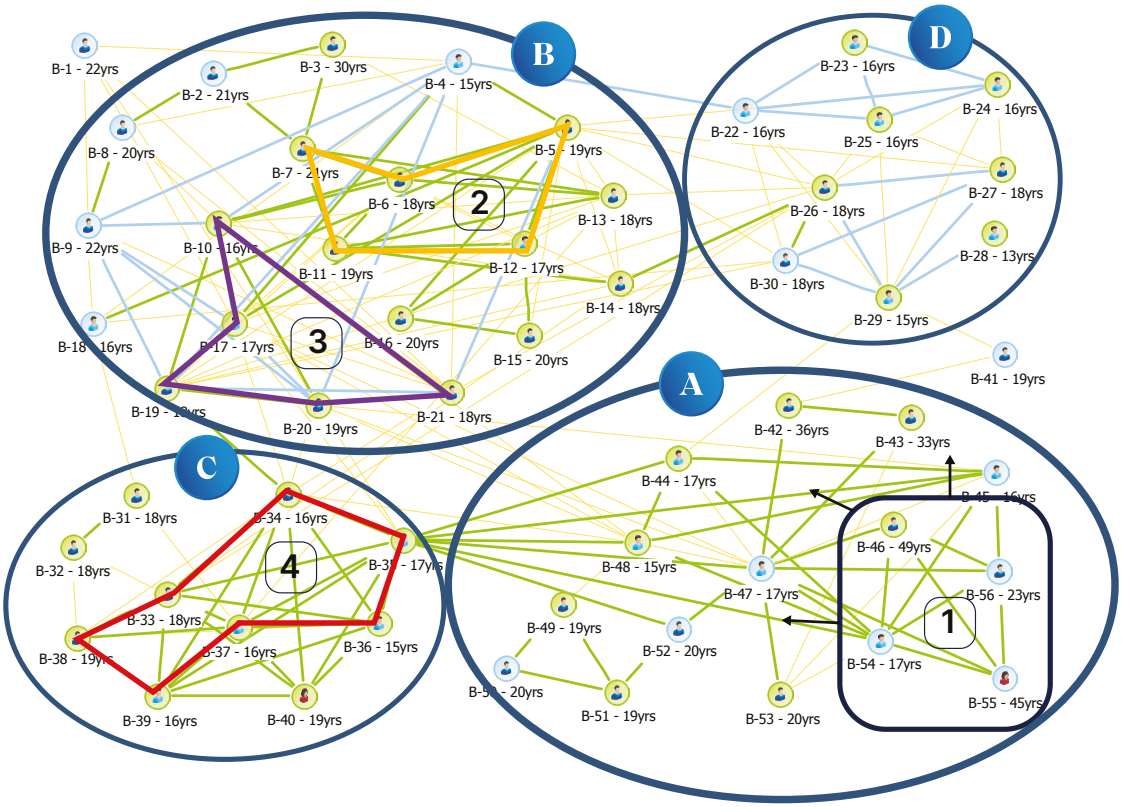


Figure 2: Adapted Bluetown criminal network map

3.1.2 Consequences of a large geographical catchment area

Bluetown had a considerably larger population size than Greentown and Redtown and this had implications for the case study. The Bluetown criminal network map contained four distinct areas as illustrated in Figure 2, and the large area covered by the network map was a key feature in the data. Garda 21, who had a reasonably strong knowledge of all areas on the network map (see Table 2) stated in his interview that: 'The four points are basically four areas you know and there is one or two people in each of them that would be, maybe not from the particular area but would be from the next estate or just up the road five minutes' walk.'[14] It was evident from the analysis that the Bluetown network map represented four different and distinctive parts of the sub-district. While the sub-district as a whole contained social and private housing, commercial units and industrial estates, the networks of offenders, mainly linked together through common burglary detections, were often living in close proximity to each other in a number of similar and neighbouring housing estates. The large area resulted in numerous criminal networks being reflected in the statistical PULSE data and then interpreted by the Garda respondents.

Due to the large geographical area and population size in Bluetown, some Garda respondents could only share their knowledge about network members within their own patrol areas. Garda 16, for example, explains this in relation to his own experience: 'One of the things that did strike me was that, my biggest knowledge would have been around the bottom left [Area C]. Just say down there in the corner of B38 and B39. That would be my area that I would have been a community guard in. Also up into the top left [Area B], maybe the likes of B11, B13, B14, B18, that would have been another part of my area as well.' This was significant for the Bluetown findings because on the ground, detailed knowledge in particular locations was sometimes limited to specific Garda respondents. We present this feature of the Bluetown case study in Table 1, indicating each Garda respondent's knowledge of the different areas on the network map. Garda mentions of the individuals in each area are numbered and coloured in blue illustrating their knowledge of certain areas over others.

'The four points are basically four areas you know and there is one or two people in each of them that would be, maybe not from the particular area but would be from the next estate or just up the road five minutes' walk.' (Garda 21)

[14] 'the four points' refers to the four corners or quadrants of the network map.

Table 1: Respondent mentions per area

	Area B (B-1 to B-21 top left)	Area D (B-22 to B-30 top right)	Area C (B-31 to B-40 bottom left)	Area A (B-41 to B-56 bottom right)
Garda 1	65	6	22	17
Garda 2	45	0	8	30
Garda 3	20	3	50	0
Garda 4	52	19	12	9
Garda 5	46	30	22	2
Garda 6	28	26	39	19
Garda 7	129	0	46	0
Garda 8	20	32	13	0
Garda 9	31	22	1	0
Garda 10	0	53	0	0
Garda 11	35	10	59	56
Garda 12	4	0	1	65
Garda 13	0	0	4	37
Garda 14	56	35	0	4
Garda 15	38	14	2	13
Garda 16	42	2	19	2
Garda 17	33	39	1	14
Garda 18	69	8	0	0
Garda 19	16	31	30	0
Garda 20	38	21	6	1
Garda 21	21	13	20	17

As illustrated by the mentions per area table, a larger number of Garda respondents had a more comprehensive knowledge of Area B of the network map (network members B1 to B21). This was also the area with the highest frequency of detections. As noted in the methodology, we determined that over 15 mentions of individuals in a particular area indicated more in-depth knowledge. For example, 18 of the 21 Garda respondents had in-depth knowledge of Area B (over 15 mentions). In contrast, Area A had seven Garda respondents with in-depth knowledge (over 15 mentions). We accommodated this determination within the analytic strategy, with the evidence from respondents who had in-depth knowledge and experience in a particular area emphasised.

3.1.3 Key network members: who are they?

This section focuses on the case profile analysis (see Appendix 1). We used two quantitative tools, first five mentioned (see Figure 3) and frequency of mentions (see Figure 4) to rank individual network members. This identified the network members whom the Gardaí considered the most relevant within the network and who warranted further examination.[15] We have also compiled a table that illustrates the number of times individual Gardaí referred to the top 20 ranked members (see Appendix 3).

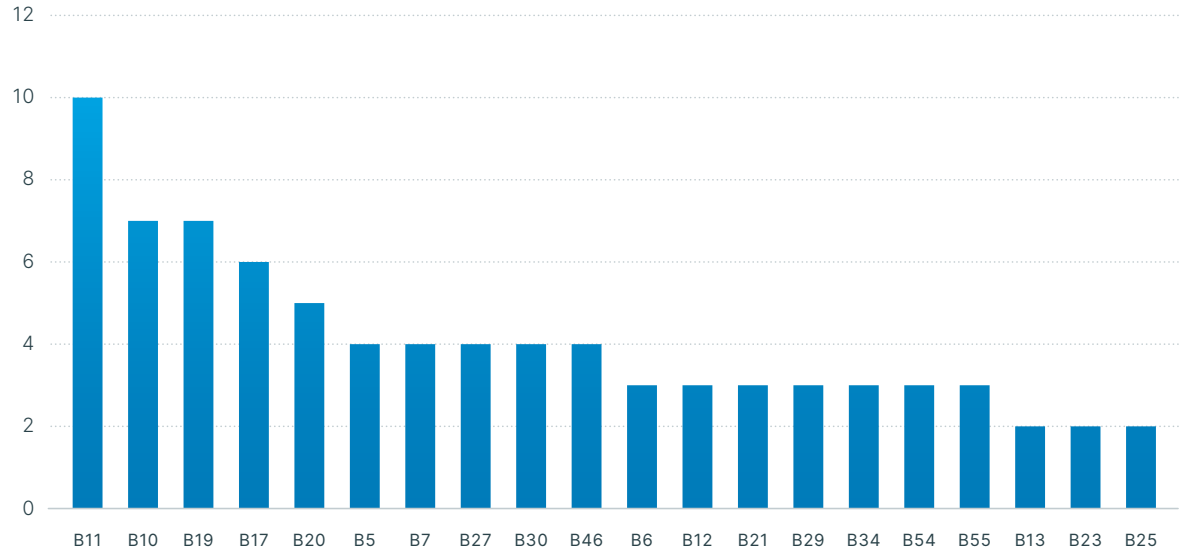


Figure 3: First five mentioned

Figure 3 illustrates the top 20 network members that Gardaí spoke about first.[16]

[15] Gardaí were aware that the focus of the report was young people's involvement in crime.
[16] See Appendix 1.

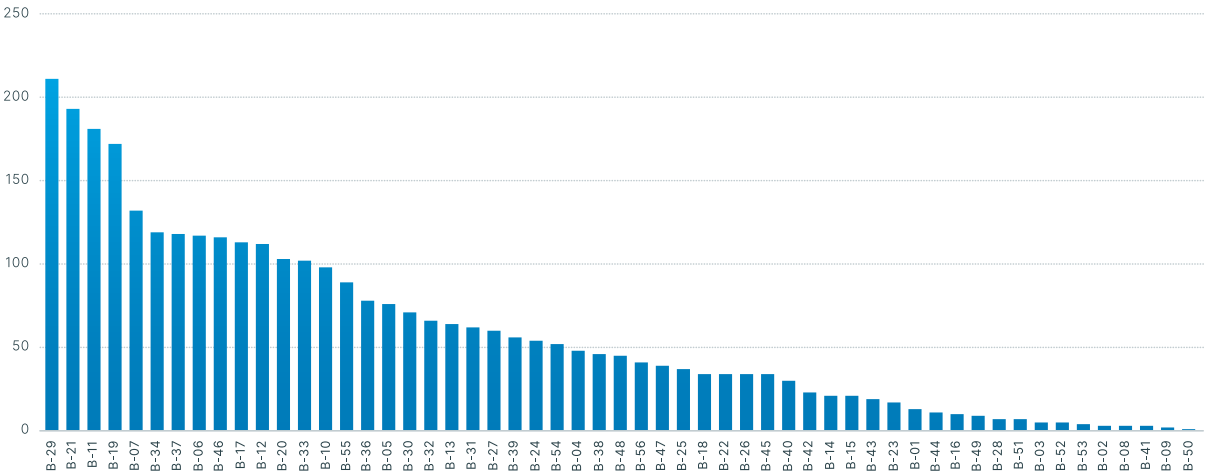


Figure 4: Frequencies of mentions

Figure 4 illustrates the total number of references per specific network member or the network members whom Gardaí spoke about the most during their interviews.

When the top 20 references in Figure 4 were compared with the 'first five mentioned' in Figure 3 there was a reasonably strong overall similarity. Table 2 presents these top 20 references as compared with the 'first five mentioned'. Only five individuals were not mentioned in both rows; these are circled in red. Three in four were mentioned at the start of interviews and referenced consistently over the duration of interviews by respondents.

Table 2: Top 20 ranked members in terms of first five mentioned and frequency of mentions

	1st	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20th
First five mentioned	B11	B10	B19	B17	B20	B5	B7	B27	B30	B46	B6	B12	B21	B29	B34	B54	B55	B13	B23	B25
Top 20 references	B29	B21	B11	B19	B7	B34	B37	B6	B46	B17	B12	B20	B33	B10	B55	B36	B35	B5	B30	B32

Individuals that appeared in the 'first five mentioned' and were in the top 20 'frequencies of mentions' were determined as the focus of further in-depth analysis. Others, though not as frequently mentioned by respondents, were also included for further analysis: for example, B54, identified as a core member of the family-based crime network at Network 1. The next section describes each network based on the resulting case profile analysis.

3.1.4 Networks and case profile analysis

In this section, we give an overview of each of the four networks and illustrate their location on the network map (see Figure 5. Network 1, located within the area circled in Blue, Area A). We then present tables of Garda respondents whose narratives we focused on following our determination of in-depth knowledge. We provide tables of summary information of the members of each network. Finally, we present the network features and case profiles of identified network members. In each, the case profiles begin with the most mentioned individual in the network.

Overview of Network 1

The data analysis suggested that Network 1 was a family-based crime network that was hierarchical in nature. Led by B46 (underlined in Figure 5), the father and head of the family, this network contained members of a core and extended family connected through burglary detections and intelligence links and living in close proximity to each other in an area of the Bluetown sub-district, Area A.

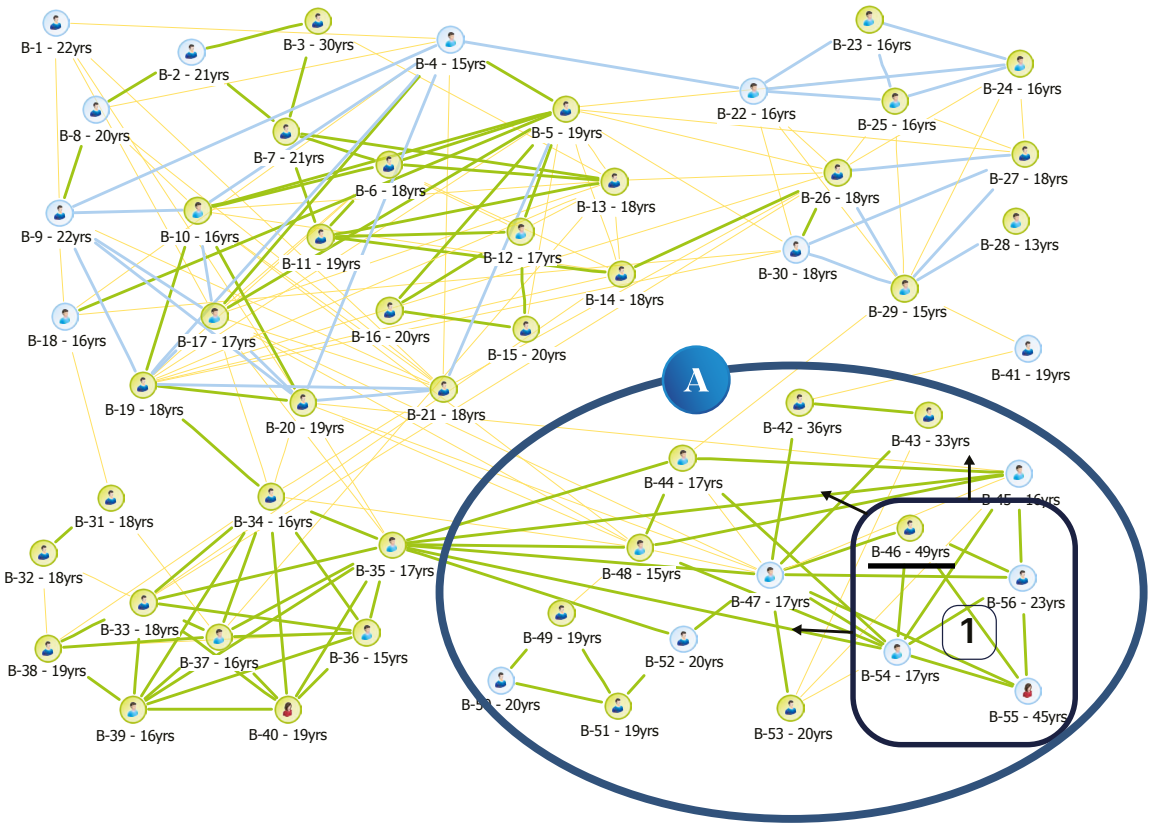


Figure 5: Network 1

Table 3: Garda respondents with knowledge of Area A

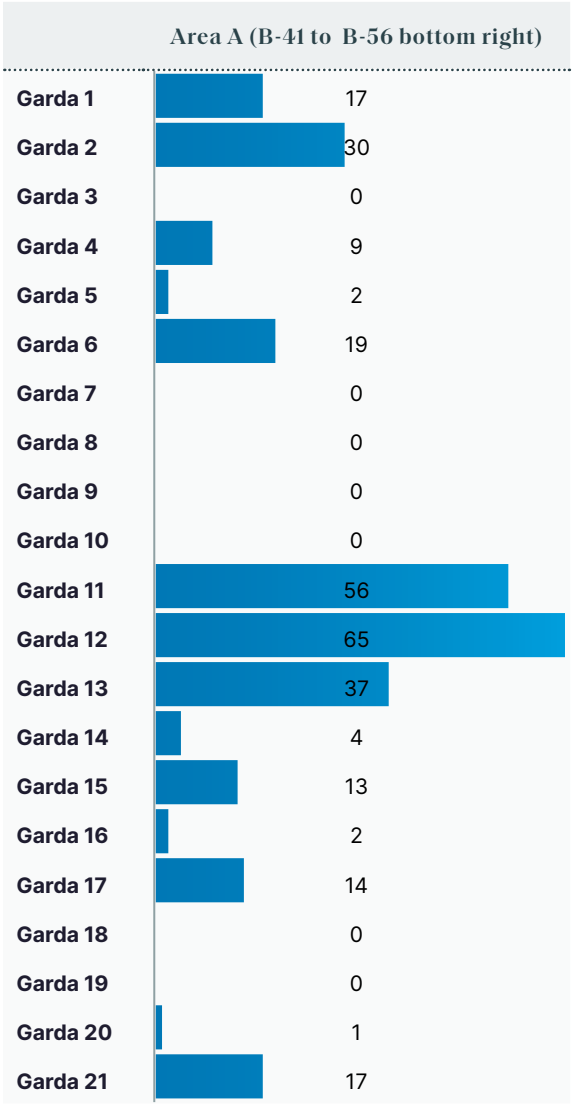


Table 3 presents the seven Garda respondents that had an in-depth knowledge of Area A (over 15 mentions), while seven did not mention any of those operating in that area in their interviews.

Table 4: Summary information on Network 1 members

Role: ID[17]	Gender	Age	First Five[18]	Source (Gardaí)[19]	Frequency of mentions[20]
B46	Male	49	4	11	116
B55	Female	45	2	6	89
B54	Male	17	3	6	48
B56	Male	23	2	7	41

Table 4 presents summary information on the network members.

Features of Network 1

Network 1 had been in existence for a number of generations in Bluetown.[21] The network centred on **B46** and **B55**, a husband and wife living in a distinct geographical area of the Bluetown sub-district. Together with their sons, **B54** and **B56**, and extended family members, they operated a criminal network that focused on property crime[22] in the wider region and nationwide. Their extended family, mainly nephews and cousins **B43**, **B44**, **B45**, **B47**, **B48**, **B53**, clustered together on the network map, were connected to the core members through various burglary detections. Gardaí described this family network as 'a massive organisation' where the proceeds of crime went back to the family (Garda 21, Garda 12). Respondents described the network as resembling a structure with some degree of organisation, 'they would have respect back and pay their percentages over and supply money to the household and supply money to the organisation as well' (Garda 21).

'they would have respect back and pay their percentages over and supply money to the household and supply money to the organisation as well.' (Garda 21)

According to the Garda respondents, there was an accepted culture of offending within the family. Respondents suggested that younger family members were being transported to commit crime by older family members, taught how to act when confronted by Gardaí and encouraged not to bring attention to themselves or the family. The family were referred to as a group that had 'always been around' in Bluetown (Garda 11).

B46, a 49-year-old male, was mentioned 116 times. He was the ninth most mentioned overall. Garda 1 identified him as the patriarch of the family and leader of the network. He was considered the powerful one and 'at the top of the food chain' (Garda 1). **B46** directed the criminal activity within the family, with his sons and nephews committing the crime. Respondents described **B46**'s extended family as carrying out burglaries locally and nationwide

[17] An anonymous identifier prescribed by the Garda analysis service to ensure confidentiality.
[18] The number of times a member appeared in the first five mentioned individuals.
[19] Number of Garda respondents that mentioned the network member.
[20] Number of paragraphs of data relating to the network member.
[21] Garda 21, Garda 12.
[22] Property crime in this instance includes burglary, robbery and theft from private and commercial premises.

where 'he'd be top' and 'be quite successful at it too' (Garda 11). Respondents described **B46** as having a mythical reputation among peers in the area. Garda 21 suggested that **B46** was able to display a great deal of wealth despite little evidence of employment, 'no problem accessing [new] cars, you know, would at a moment's notice go out and buy a new car'.

B55, a 45-year-old female, married to B46, was mentioned 89 times, the 15th most mentioned overall. Garda 12 suggested that **B55** encouraged criminality and her children were going out to commit crime 'on their parents' orders'. Garda 12 referred to one incident where **B55** and **B46** were selling the items on afterwards. Two respondents[23] described an incident where one of B55's children, not on the network map, was brought to a local supermarket and was caught walking out with a large amount of unpaid-for groceries in a trolley. Garda 12, who made the most references to individuals in the area (see Table 3), believed that both B55 and B46 were involved in directing their children, nephews and extended family to commit specific property crime and they were often transported by B55 to commit these crimes. Gardaí 12 and 13 suggested that B55 was the victim of domestic violence perpetrated by B46. They indicated that she had taken refuge in domestic violence accommodation on more than one occasion.

B54, a 17-year-old male and son of B46 and B55, was mentioned 48 times by respondents.[24] Garda 13, a respondent with in-depth knowledge of the area, suggested that he was at an elevated risk of criminal involvement due to his family and their continued encouragement and normalisation of criminal behaviour as a way of life. Garda 13 also suggested that **B54** was being taught how to commit crime by his parents and his older brother, and in addition was taught how to interact with Gardaí and not draw attention to himself and the family. Other respondents[25] suggested that **B54** received a primary school education but little or no secondary education and as such had few other opportunities available to him.

B56, a 23-year-old male and older brother of B54, was mentioned 41 times.[26] It was suggested that he was the 'runner and the doer' in the network, and was aided by his cousins B43, B44, B45, B47, B48, B53, all committing crime for the family (Garda 12). Garda 12 reported that **B56** had spent time in prison after being convicted of an assault. Garda 12 suggested that he was involved in various burglaries in the wider region and at the time of the interviews did not commit crime in his own area but looked elsewhere for criminal opportunities. **B56** was married with children and lived with his partner near his parents, B46 and B55, and their extended family members.

[23] Garda 11, Garda 12.
[24] B54 was not in the top 20 but due to his position in the network warranted in-depth analysis.
[25] Garda 11, Garda 13.
[26] B56 was also not in the top 20 but due to his position in the network warranted in-depth analysis.

Overview of Network 2

Network 2 contained a cluster of members from surrounding estates that started committing what Gardaí described as minor offences locally before being detected for burglaries of commercial premises where the primary goal was attaining cash items. These individuals went on to commit more complex burglaries and serious crime and, at the time of the interviews, three of five were serving long prison sentences. Figure 6 illustrates Network 2 as located in Area B.

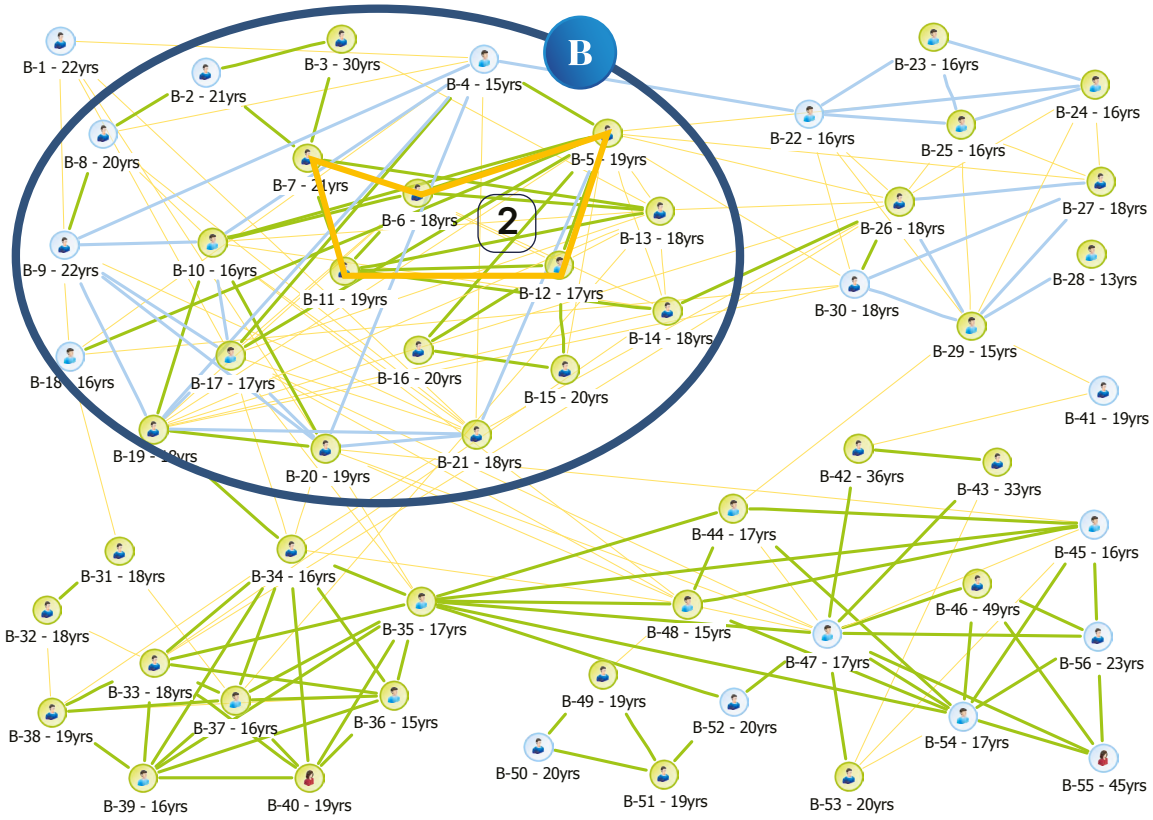


Figure 6: Network 2

Table 5: Garda respondents with knowledge of Area B

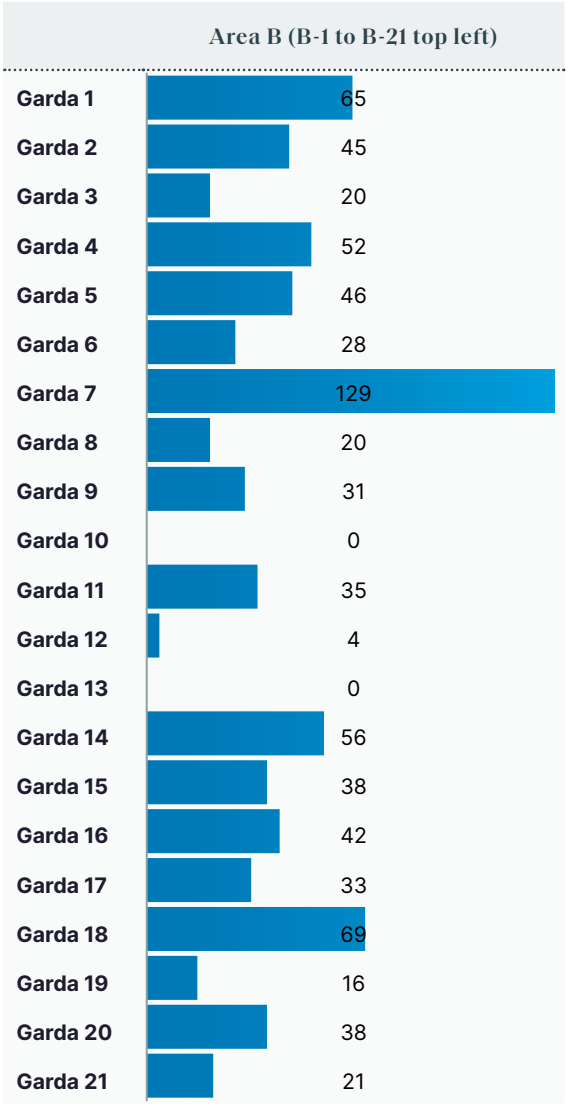


Table 5 presents Area B as the area that most Garda respondents were familiar with: 18 respondents had 15 or more references to that area.

Table 6: Summary information on Network 2 members

Role: ID	Gender	Age	First Five	Source (Gardaí)	Frequency of mentions
B11	Male	19	10	15	181
B7	Male	21	5	15	132
B6	Male	18	5	15	117
B12	Male	17	3	14	112
B5	Male	19	4	14	71

Table 6 presents summary information on the network members.

Features of Network 2

Gardaí described this network as an emerging crime gang at the time represented by the network map (2014/2015). They operated from a geographically distinct area of Bluetown centred on a number of housing estates. The network consisted of members **B11**, **B7**, **B6**, **B12** and **B5**, a group that lived in close proximity to one another and started committing crime locally to spend immediately: 'The money is going on drugs, clothes, holidays' (Garda 18). Gardaí described the group's offending as progressing to more serious crime – for example, burglaries, assault and robbery – as they got older. Respondents described this group as being involved in a serious aggravated burglary where a large sum of money was taken. Garda 21 described this as 'quite a step up' for them at the time and B11, B5 and B12 were incarcerated for long periods as a result. Garda 16 described this group's progression to serious crime and the possible outcomes of their incarceration: 'they were just young fellas that all grew up on the same estate. All within a hundred yards of each other and they would be into robbing from people, criminal damage, public order …Then aggravated burglary … But will come out with all the credibility of being inside for so long.'

The evidence suggested that, for this network, proximity, lack of supervision and the thrill linked to being in a gang, combined with direct criminal influence within their families, offered pull and push factors[27] that led to sustained network activity. It was suggested that members B11, B12, B5, B7 had been negatively influenced by their family's criminality and this, in Garda opinion, was a factor in their becoming involved in more serious criminal activity.[28] Garda 20 described the kudos and status linked to being in a gang in Bluetown and that this was a factor in the members' sustained criminal involvement and network activity.

[27] The original Greentown study highlighted powerful push factors, for example debt and fear, combined with pull factors, for example quick cash, that facilitated network retention (Redmond, 2016).
[28] Garda 7, Garda 20.

However, this network was bound by peer- and 'associate'-based relationships[29], not on family ties: criminal enterprise was the group's common bond. Gardaí suggested that the network began to disintegrate when some members were facing long prison sentences. At the time of the interviews the network was effectively broken up due to law enforcement intervention and members' subsequent incarceration (Garda 15).

The evidence suggested that, for this network, proximity, lack of supervision and the thrill associated with being in a gang, combined with direct criminal influence within their families, offered pull and push factors that led to sustained network activity.

B11, a 19-year-old male, was the third most mentioned individual on the network map, with 181 mentions. Garda 16 indicated that **B11** had a history of offending, with detections ranging from driving violations to robbery and burglary. Garda 9 suggested that **B11**'s father influenced his criminal trajectory by being involved in crime locally when **B11** was younger. This influence, combined with a lack of appropriate supervision, was described by respondents as accelerating his criminal career.[30] While Garda 14 suggested that his mother was supportive, it was also suggested that there were criminal and drug influences within the wider family that negatively shaped **B11**'s behaviour.[31] At the time of the interviews, **B11** was incarcerated.

B7, a 21-year-old male, was the fifth most mentioned by respondents, with 132 mentions. Garda 15 described him as a dangerous offender who was incarcerated for burglary and assault at the time the interviews. His family were involved in crime and his brother (not on the network map) was considered to be a 'ringleader' in the area (Garda 7).[32] His father and uncles were all known for their criminality in different areas of Bluetown, 'B7 alright I know his family are knee deep, like they'd be a crime family like you know' (Garda 11). Garda 1 suggested that **B7** had younger brothers who looked up to him and were becoming involved in crime because of his influence. Gardaí described **B7** as having an important role within the group; for example, Garda 15 suggested 'B7 would be a leader, a type of a leader of that gang'. Garda 14 suggested that **B7** learned the 'tricks of the trade' from his older brother.

B6, an 18-year-old male, was the eighth most mentioned by respondents, with 117 mentions. Garda 16 suggested that a lack of supervision combined with the influence of his peer group led to his criminal involvement. Garda 7 suggested that within his family, his mother, as sole guardian, struggled with his supervision and had sent him to his grandfather to keep him away from negative neighbourhood influences. However, Garda 7 commented that this did not work and 'the buzz and the gang were too much and he went back in'. Garda 1 indicated that **B6**, sometimes aided by B11 and B12, used to steal cars or buy used cars to sell on at a profit to other young people in the estate. Garda 7 and Garda 14 also highlighted stealing cars as a feature of the group's activities.

B12, a 17-year-old male, was the 11th most mentioned individual on the network map, with 112 mentions. **B12** was described by Garda respondents as a prolific offender that would always be drawn to crime.[33] **B12** and his brother (not on the network map), often referred to together, came from a single-parent household, were early school leavers and as a consequence were involved with alternative education services in the area (Garda 7). Garda 7 suggested that numerous efforts were made by statutory

[29] The Greentown study highlighted the difference between strong family, kinship-based relationships within the Greentown criminal network and weaker 'associate' peer-based relationships (Redmond, 2016).
[30] Garda 7, Garda 9.
[31] Garda 4, Garda 5.
[32] Garda 7 had the most references to individuals in Area 2 (129).
[33] Garda 1, Garda 14, Garda 20

and voluntary agencies to intervene and keep the brothers away from crime, but these efforts were unsuccessful and the influence of others in the network was too great. At the time of the interviews, both brothers were incarcerated.

B5, a 19-year-old male and cousin of B12, was the 18th most mentioned by respondents with 71 mentions. It was indicated that his burglaries were more careless than others in the group: 'he'd kick a door in, go in for two minutes, destroy the place and out' (Garda 1). **B5** had previous detections for theft and public order and was suggested by Garda 17 to have no regard for the Gardaí or those in authority. **B5** was described as coming from a 'crime family' (Garda 11). Garda 17 suggested that **B5** was involved in selling drugs for a local drug dealer in his estate and that this drug dealer (not on the network map) controlled the drugs network in the area. Along with B6 and B7, **B5** was also suggested as being a prolific offender that influenced the others.[34] At the time of the interviews, **B5** was incarcerated.

Overview of Network 3

Network 3 was contained within the area of the largest concentration of burglary detections on the map (Area B). Within Network 3, co-offending was established by a combination of similar risk factors among members and bound together by peer-based relationships. In this criminal network, Garda respondents described network members as stealing from local properties and committing crime 'on their own doorstep' (Garda 1). At the time of the interviews, four of five network members were incarcerated. Figure 7 illustrates Network 3 as located in Area B.

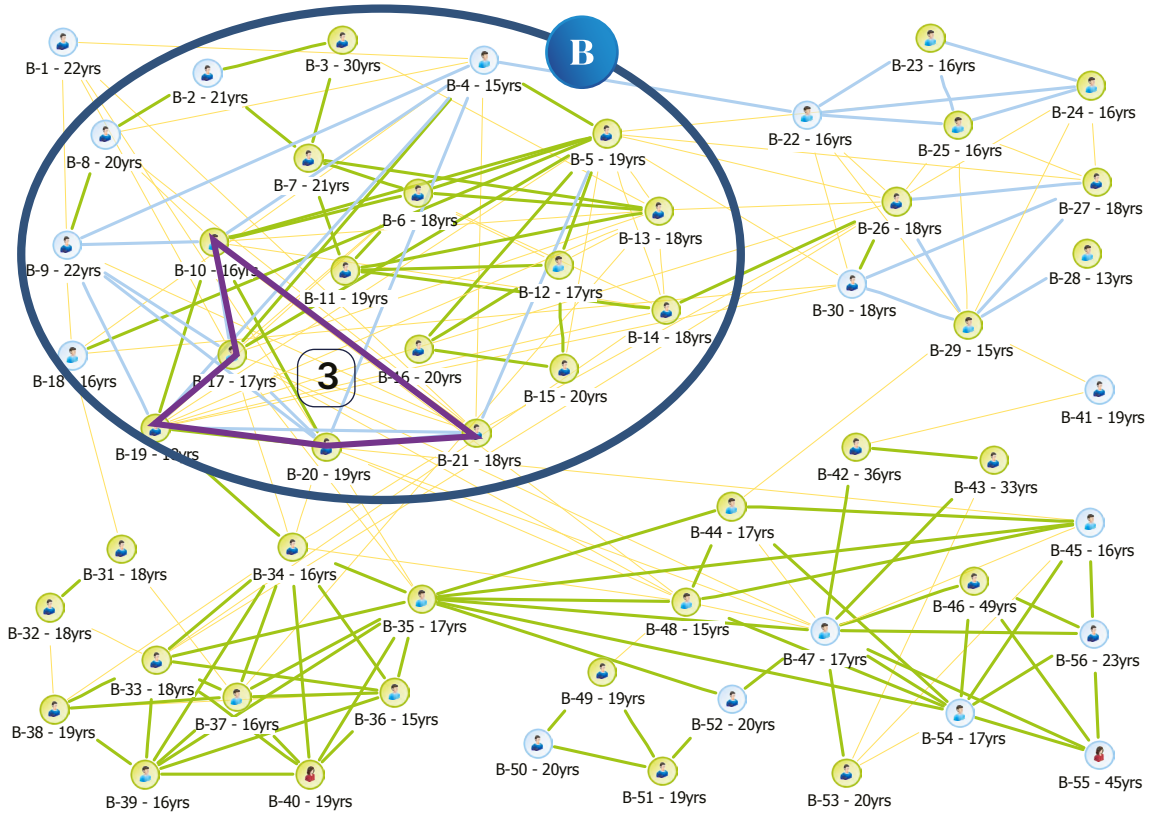


Figure 7: Network 3

[34] Garda 2, Garda 15, Garda 21.

As per Network 2, Network 3 operated in Area B, this was the area that most Garda respondents were familiar with (18 respondents had 15 or more references to that area, see Table 5 as per Network 2). Table 7 presents summary information of the network members.

Table 7: Summary information on Network 3 members

Role: ID	Gender	Age	First Five	Source (Gardaí)	Frequency of mentions
B11	Male	19	10	15	181
B7	Male	21	5	15	132
B6	Male	18	5	15	117
B12	Male	17	3	14	112
B5	Male	19	4	14	71

Features of Network 3

Network 3 contained core members **B21**, **B19**, **B17**, **B20** and **B10**, a group that offended together and committed burglaries on foot in close proximity to where they lived. The network members grew up close to one another and were all friends from an early age, (Garda 16). One feature of this friendship was an underlying secrecy within the group whereby the members trusted each other not to disclose sensitive information. This secrecy helped to sustain the network in the area (Garda 1). Garda 11 described network members as having been involved in violent aggravated burglaries – 'they've just taken it to another step' – and referred to them as a 'dangerous crew'. Other Garda respondents suggested that this network was feared within their immediate community and local residents did not report them out of fear of repercussions.[35] Garda 5 indicated that other young people in the area 'would be afraid and fearful of them'. Garda 1 suggested that the fear that existed in the community resulted in some crime going unreported and this in turn helped to sustain the network in the area. 'They [residents] absolutely have a fear. Now they all know them, they all know them by name, they absolutely. But even if they were to see B19 or B20 or B21 burgling a house, they could be reluctant to, they may say I seen them but they would never put it to paper or never become a witness' (Garda 1).

'They [residents] absolutely have a fear. Now they all know them, they all know them by name, they absolutely. But even if they were to see B19 or B20 or B21 burgling a house, they could be reluctant to, they may say I seen them but they would never put it to paper or never become a witness.' (Garda 1)

Despite this, B21, B10, B17 and B19 were incarcerated for various offences at the time of the interviews. Garda 15 also suggested that some members had fallen out in the past following a disagreement.

[35] Garda 1, Garda 15

B21, an 18-year-old male and older brother of B10, was the second most mentioned by respondents with 193 mentions. **B21** was involved in burglaries and assaults, and it was indicated that 'he was on the rampage committing robberies' in the area until he was incarcerated (Garda 18). Garda 2 suggested that **B21** and his brother were known for breaking into houses in the estate where they resided, targeting cash and easy to sell items. Garda 21 suggested that **B21** was an influence on his brother and others in the group when it came to burglary offences. Garda respondents described his family as being very difficult to deal with and aggressive towards Gardaí.[36] Other Garda respondents suggested that a lack of supervision combined with a negative peer influence and the active network in the area were catalysts for his deterioration into atypical offending behaviour.[37]

B19, an 18-year-old male, was the fourth most mentioned by respondents, with 172 mentions. Garda 1 suggested that he was one of the leaders of the network and was a 'very prolific burglar' that 'wreaked havoc' in his own estate. Along with burglaries, Garda 1 suggested that **B19** was involved in a number of serious assaults in Bluetown and in other areas. Other respondents described **B19** as a drug user that would look for quick money through crime to pay for drugs.[38] Garda 14 considered his family's economic deprivation as a catalyst for his offending. At the time of the interviews **B19** was incarcerated.

B17, a 17-year-old male, was the 10th most mentioned by respondents, with 113 mentions. Garda 15 suggested that **B17** was involved in robberies in the area and wider region along with numerous burglaries of commercial premises and houses in Bluetown. Garda 11 described **B17** and B10 as 'like the lieutenants in the group': they were not directing the group's activities but exercised a degree of agency and discretion; for example, they engaged in burglaries themselves without the wider group. Garda 15 suggested that **B17**'s family were difficult to deal with, 'very much anti-Garda. Anti-authority.' **B17** was incarcerated at the time of the interviews.

B20, a 20-year-old male, was the 12th most mentioned overall, with 103 mentions. Garda 1 suggested that he was a prolific burglar that had brothers and family members who were involved in crime. Garda 15 suggested that alcohol abuse, drug use and domestic violence were suspected issues within the family. While **B20** was connected to the burglary network in his area, he was also related to the family-based network, Network 1. At the time of the interviews, B20 had stopped all associations with B21, B17 and B10 following a disagreement and a resulting violent incident.[39] **B20** and B48[40] (B48 was positioned in Area A on the map) were identified as brothers. Garda 21 suggested that B48 had been 'drawn to his family members on the bottom right' of the network map rather than mixing with others and 'he was doing his apprenticeship for the want of a better word, with his relatives and just stayed on that path'. Garda 21 described **B20** as a much more violent individual than his brother B48 and following the disagreement, it was suggested that **B20** offended on his own or with members of his extended family in Network 1.

B10, a 16-year-old male and brother of B21, was the 14th most mentioned by respondents, with 98 mentions. Respondents suggested that the brothers committed crime together and were involved in local burglaries where they and the other network members were indiscriminate in their targets. Their primary objective was selling items for cash.[41] Garda 18 indicated that the

[36] Garda 15, Garda 21.
[37] Garda 18, Garda 7.
[38] Garda 1, Garda 14, Garda 20.
[39] Garda 1, Garda 15.
[40] B48, 15 years of age, was not in the top 20 mentioned.
[41] Garda 1, Garda 15.

eldest, B21, influenced **B10**'s criminal career: 'B21 he's the older brother. He kind of was the first one to start committing serious crime. And then B10 the younger brother then he started following suit.' **B10** was incarcerated at the time of the interviews.

Overview of Network 4

Network 4 was located in another distinct area of Bluetown and appeared as a cluster of burglary detections on the bottom left of the network map (Area C). Respondents described Network 4 as a close-knit group of friends living in close proximity to each other.[42] Although no common drug sale offences were detected on PULSE (no red lines connecting these individuals on the map), drug dealing was identified by Garda respondents as the central feature of their criminal activity,[43] with descriptions of the recruitment of young community members into hierarchical drugs structures.[44] Respondents suggested that those on the network map were retail-level street dealers, the ones carrying the drugs, the most vulnerable and at risk of being caught.[45] Key to its operation was G24, an individual that did not appear on the network map. The following Figure 8 illustrates Network 4 as located in Area C.

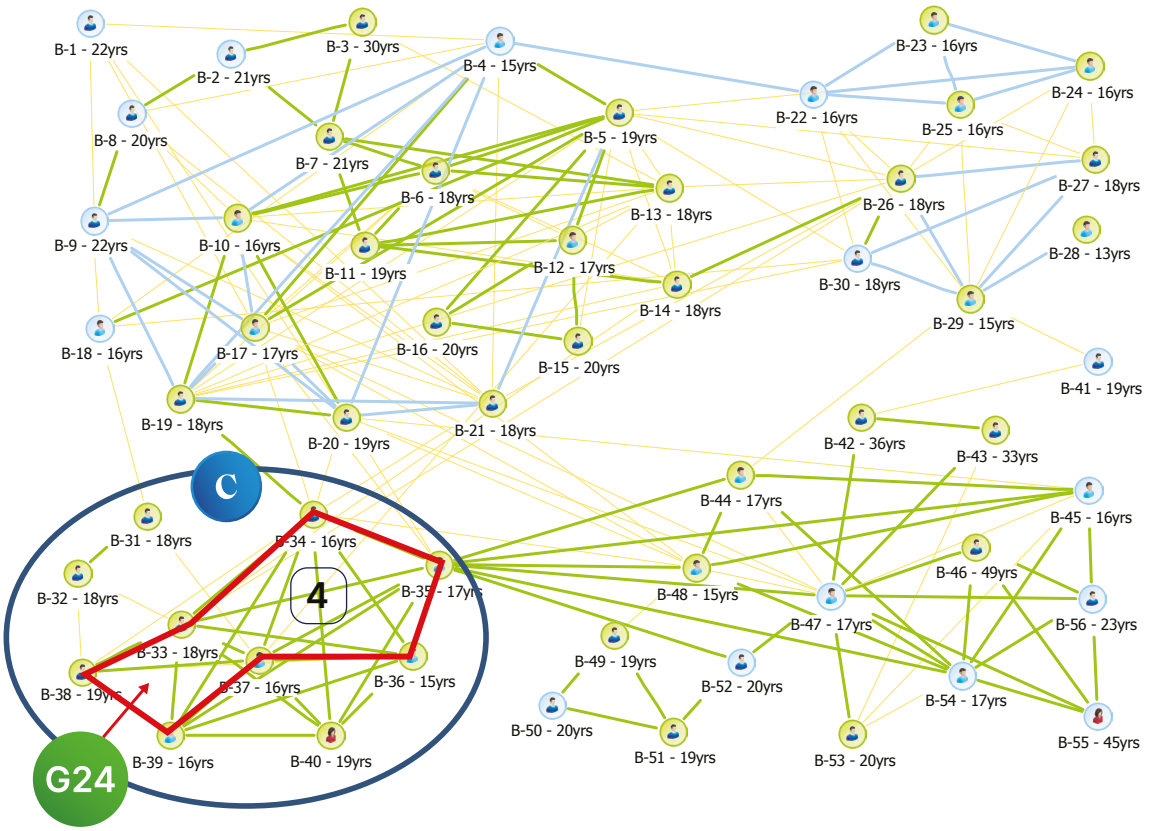


Figure 8: Network 4

[42] Garda 1, Garda 11, Garda 15.
[43] Garda 5, Garda 11, Garda 15, Garda 16, Garda 19.
[44] Garda 3, Garda 16.
[45] Garda 15, Garda 16.

Table 8: Garda respondents with knowledge of Area C

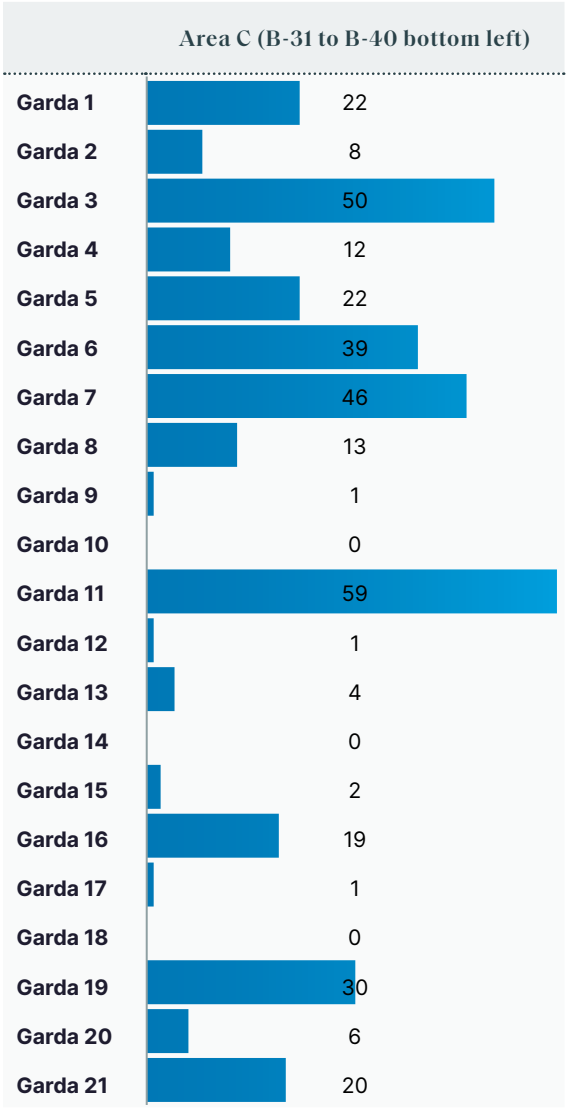


Table 8 presents Area C: this area had nine Garda respondents with an in-depth knowledge (15 or more references).

Table 9: Summary information on Network 4 members

Role: ID	Gender	Age	First Five	Source (Gardaí)	Frequency of mentions
B34	Male	16	3	13	119
B37	Male	16	2	12	118
B33	Male	18	1	11	102
B36	Male	15	0	11	78
B35	Male	17	0	10	76
B39	Male	16	2	6	54
B38	Male	18	0	8	46

Table 9 presents summary information on the network members.

Features of Network 4

As with Networks 2 and 3, the individuals involved with Network 4 grew up in a number of local authority housing estates and started offending together at an early age. The network contained members **B33** to **B39**, linked on the map through numerous burglary detections. Despite these burglary links, respondents indicated that drugs for sale and supply were the main feature of this group's criminal activity.[46] Respondents suggested that missing from the map were those that controlled the supply of drugs, referred to by Garda 16 as the 'kingpins'. A hierarchical drugs structure was identified with an external influence and an individual not on the network map. He was referred to as 'G24' (a random identifier given by Garda 16 for ease of discussion) and was suggested as controlling the group's activities. Their drug dealing was described as centering on a number of estates in Bluetown with network members active and visible on the street. Garda 19 suggested that the network also involved other people, usually younger, 'running drugs' for them. [47]

Garda respondents described an element of organisation and external influence that compelled young people in Network 4 to stay involved in selling drugs locally.[48] Garda 16 described G24 as the 'new generation' that controlled the street-level drug dealing in the area. Garda 16 suggested that G24 was governed by higher-level dealers and suppliers that did not feature on the network map and that the local residents were aware of this and did not interfere with his business. Garda respondents suggested that those in Network 4 held a level of status and power over their immediate community, with local people afraid to challenge drugs structures in the area.[49] They described Network 4 as being organised, stable and difficult to disrupt. 'I was at a community meeting there during the week and that's what they're referred to as up there, like a little army like you know. Like it's very hard now for us to get much information and infiltrate them because they're just, there's none of them that are willing to speak to guards or anything like that' (Garda 11).

Garda respondents suggested that those in Network 4 held a level of status and power over their immediate community, with local people afraid to challenge drugs structures in the area.

[46] Garda 5, Garda 11, Garda 15, Garda 16, Garda 19.
[47] These did not appear on the network map.
[48] Garda 7, Garda 11, Garda 16.
[49] Garda 7, Garda 16.

B34, a 16-year-old male, was the sixth most mentioned individual, with 119 mentions. Garda 1 suggested that drug use and criminality were evident in the family, with his mother and father and the extended family involved in drugs crime locally. Garda 6 described **B34** as being out of school at an early age; he went through the Garda Diversion Programme[50] and had since become involved with the adult criminal justice system. Garda 1 also suggested that he was 'a pleasant fella to talk to but over the years he would have been influenced by the rest'. **B34** was considered to be involved in retail or lower level drug dealing in the area: 'B34 in fact, just came across him last week, we did a search of a house and they were in the middle of bagging up some weed' (Garda 5).

B37, a 16-year-old male, was the seventh most mentioned individual, with 118 mentions. He and his brother (who did not feature on the network map) were suggested to be among the 'ringleaders' within the group, with both seeming to have moved into more of a 'leadership' role.[51] Garda 11 suggested that **B37** and his brother 'organised' the criminal activity of the group. Garda 16 indicated that the brothers lived in a single-parent household where supervision was an issue, (Garda 16). Garda 3 also suggested that their father suffered from addiction issues, and that the family including **B37** was targeted by local drug dealers in the area to work for them.

B33, an 18-year-old male, was the 13th most mentioned individual, with 102 mentions. He had 3 older siblings that had a history of involvement with the Gardaí for various offences, (Garda 3). Respondents suggested that there was a history of domestic violence within the household.[52] Garda 11 suggested that parental supervision was at a minimum and that **B33**'s parents were 'addicts themselves' and not able to care for their children effectively. Garda 5 indicated that **B33** was out of school at an early age and was suspected of being out on the street corners dealing drugs during the day as a result.

B36, a 15-year-old male, was the 16th most mentioned individual, with 78 mentions. He was described by Garda 16 as being from a single-parent household, economically deprived, and with both parents having a history of drug misuse. Garda respondents indicated that he had a brother who was also involved in criminality in the area, but he did not appear on the network map.[53] **B36** was described by Garda respondents as having been detected for various other offences – for example, bike theft and car theft – as well as the burglaries that appeared on the network map.[54] His drug dealing was seen as being at the lower retail end.

B35, a 17-year-old male, was the 17th most mentioned individual, with 76 mentions. On the network map, **B35** had six connections through burglary detections to different members of Network 1, and six connections through burglary detections to different members of Network 4. Garda respondents indicated that he lived in the same area as the other Network 4 members and committed crime with them but was also directly related to B44 and the family-based crime network in Area A, Network 1.[55] Respondents additionally suggested that **B35**'s father, brother and uncles were involved in criminality in Bluetown.[56] Garda 21 suggested that, at the time of the interviews, he associated with his extended family more in Network 1 and was suspected of being involved in recruiting younger extended family members to do burglaries with him. Garda 21 suggested that at the time of the interviews 'he'd be more of an influence than B47 or 48' in Network 1.

[50] The Garda Diversion Programme formally established in the Children's Act 2001 is aimed at preventing young offenders in Ireland from entering the full criminal justice system by offering them a second chance through intervention.
[51] Garda 6, Garda 11.
[52] Garda 3, Garda 16.
[53] Garda 6, Garda 16.
[54] Garda 6, Garda 11, Garda 16.
[55] Garda 1, Garda 11, Garda 16.
[56] Garda 13, Garda 21.

Both **B38** and **B39** did not appear in the top 20 mentions but were identified by Garda respondents as members of Network 4.[57] Garda 19 suggested that **B38** was associating with more serious drug dealers than some of the others: that an 'informal hierarchy' existed and while B33, B34, and B36 were the lower level, **B38** was at a 'slightly higher level'. **B39** was described as a drug user that was dealing for older individuals, turning a profit and getting drugs for personal use for free (Garda 11). Garda 7 indicated that **B39**'s mother was deceased and suggested that his father was a drug user. Garda 7 suggested that this led to **B39** being removed from home and put into care at a young age. Garda 16 indicated that at the time of the interviews he was again living in the area.

Area D: Evidence of desistance from crime

Labelled as Area D on the adapted network map, this was another distinct geographical area where detected offenders lived close to one another. Garda respondents suggested that this area contained some individuals that were no longer involved in serious or atypical crime, with the exception of B29 (circled). Despite many being linked through a common robbery incident, at the time of the interviews some of this group were not involved in serious criminality together and thus not labelled as an operational criminal network in this study. Additionally, some Garda respondents suggested that some were successfully desisting[58] from crime.[59] Figure 9 illustrates Area D as located on the network map with B29 also highlighted as a possible outlier.

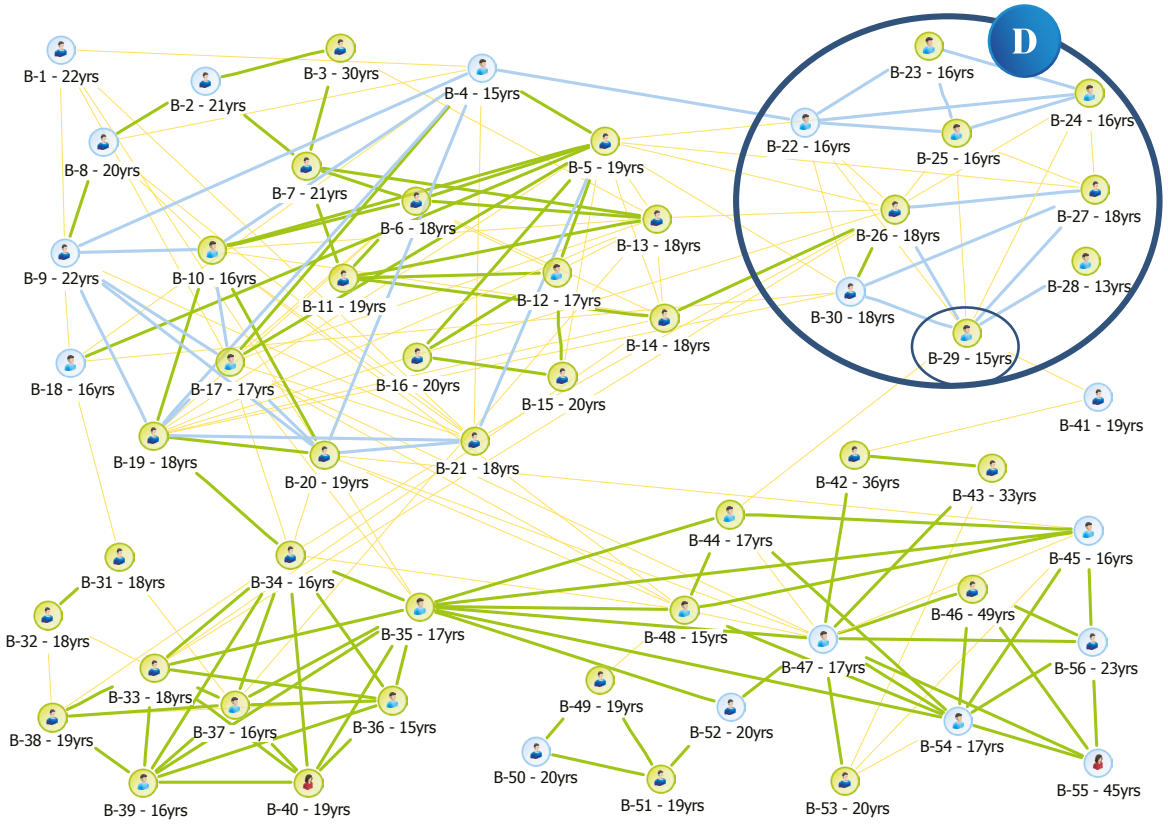


Figure 9: Area D

[57] Garda 1, Garda 16, Garda 19.
[58] Desistance is the sustained cessation of crime (Laub and Sampson, 2001).
[59] Garda 10, Garda 14, Garda 19, Garda 21.

Table 10: Garda respondents with knowledge of Area D

	Area D (B-2 to B-30 bottom left)
Garda 1	6
Garda 2	0
Garda 3	3
Garda 4	19
Garda 5	30
Garda 6	26
Garda 7	0
Garda 8	32
Garda 9	22
Garda 10	53
Garda 11	10
Garda 12	0
Garda 13	0
Garda 14	35
Garda 15	14
Garda 16	2
Garda 17	39
Garda 18	8
Garda 19	31
Garda 20	21
Garda 21	13

Table 10 presents Area D: this area had 10 Garda respondents with an in-depth knowledge (15 or more mentions).

Features of Area D

Taking B22 as an example, Garda 10 indicated 'I would put him in the category where some young people that I've dealt with sometimes when they reach 18 or a little bit older something just clicks with them. And they seem to turn a corner and sort of pull back.' Garda 10 also attributed this 'pulling back' of offending to B24 and B25, with other reasons for the cessation of offending within the group noted as a housing relocation (in the cases of B22 and B28), a supportive parent (B22 and B24) and interventions; for example, the Garda Youth Diversion Project[60] (in the cases of B22, B24 and B25).[61]

'I would put him in the category where some young people that I've dealt with sometimes when they reach 18 or a little bit older something just clicks with them. And they seem to turn a corner and sort of pull back.' (Garda 10)

However, despite the suggestions of crime cessation among the group in the area, **B29**, circled on the Area D network map in Figure 9, was described by Garda respondents as a prominent individual who had continued his involvement in serious crime.

B29 was the most mentioned individual on the entire network map. He was mentioned by 14 Garda respondents and described as having started offending at a young age and became involved in more serious crime as he matured.[62] He had 211 references in total (as presented in Table 11) and was an extended family member of Network 1.

Table 11: Summary information of B29, the most referenced individual

Role: ID	Gender	Age	First Five	Source (Gardaí)	Frequency of mentions
B29	Male	15	3	14	211

B29 was specifically described as a 'one-man crime wave' by two Garda respondents.[63] Others suggested he was a prolific offender with multiple referrals to the Garda Diversion Programme. Garda 15 suggested that he got involved in crime at an early age 'by virtue of his family'. Garda 8 indicated that his mother had spent a number of years in prison and his father suffered from alcohol addiction issues and struggled with his supervision. Garda 19 described **B29**'s parents as indifferent in relation to his involvement in crime. As with B46 and B55 in Network 1, Garda 19 suggested that **B29**'s parents used their children for criminal purposes. Some respondents did not believe that **B29** would ever be in a position to move away from criminal involvement due to his family connections:[64] 'The likes of say B29, his family

'The likes of say B29, his family would be heavily involved in crime nationwide, he wouldn't be getting out of that life by virtue of all his family, his father, mother, all his uncles and aunts … it's organised crime you know. I'd be very surprised to ever see him not involved in crime.' (Garda 15)

60 Garda Youth Diversion Projects are community-based youth development projects that seek to divert young people from becoming involved (or further involved) in criminal behaviour.
61 Garda 6, Garda 8, Garda 10.
60 Garda Youth Diversion Projects are community-based youth development projects that seek to divert young people from becoming involved (or further involved) in criminal behaviour.
61 Garda 6, Garda 8, Garda 10.
62 Garda 8, Garda 10, Garda 17.
63 Garda 5, Garda 19.

would be heavily involved in crime nationwide, he wouldn't be getting out of that life by virtue of all his family, his father, mother, all his uncles and aunts … it's organised crime you know. I'd be very surprised to ever see him not involved in crime' (Garda 15). Some also noted that he now offended with other family members contained within Network 1 but his chaotic nature and reputation meant that this was not consistent and he would look for any opportunity to offend.[65]

Summary

Throughout this section, the weight of evidence based on Garda testimony suggests that at least four networks were in operation in Bluetown. These networks were based in three distinct geographical areas, with a fourth area consisting of offenders connected through a common robbery detection, some of whom were now desisting from crime. These networks were established and sustained in different ways: a family-based network (Network 1), close geographical proximity and peer relationships (Networks 2, 3) and a loosely structured drugs hierarchy (Network 4). Some of these networks were controlled by more senior and powerful individuals; for example, B46 in Network 1 and G24 in Network 4. Their operational sustainability, as will be explained in Findings 2 and 3, depended on a number of presenting factors with certain core network members central to their existence. Finally, in Bluetown we were dealing with a large geographical spread and a considerably larger area than that covered in the original Greentown study. This had methodological consequences regarding respondent familiarity with certain areas and led to us concentrating on certain respondents over others in the analysis. We prioritised those who had in-depth knowledge and experience in a particular area in our case profile analysis.

[64] Garda 5, Garda 19.
[65] Garda 8, Garda 19, Garda 21.

3.2 Finding 2

A combination of risk factors was linked to young people developing more serious and prolific offending patterns across all networks.

Finding 1, based on case profile analysis, suggested that Bluetown contained four different networks, each distinctive in its operation. Finding 2, based on thematic analysis, suggests an overarching theme that despite these differences **young network members shared common risk factors that were linked to developing more serious and prolific offending patterns across all networks.**

We present this finding in the following section as four sub-themes.

Sub-themes:

1. **Family ties to crime**[66]
2. **Proximity to a network of offending peers**[67]
3. **Individual risk factors**[68]
4. **Pro-criminal norms**[69]

Across all networks, the young people involved displayed a combination of risk factors. The analysis of Garda interviews suggested that these risk factors when combined may have accelerated offending and compelled some young people to commit atypical types of crime in Bluetown (see Figure 10). This section will present these risk factors starting with the most prevalent sub-theme, family ties to crime.

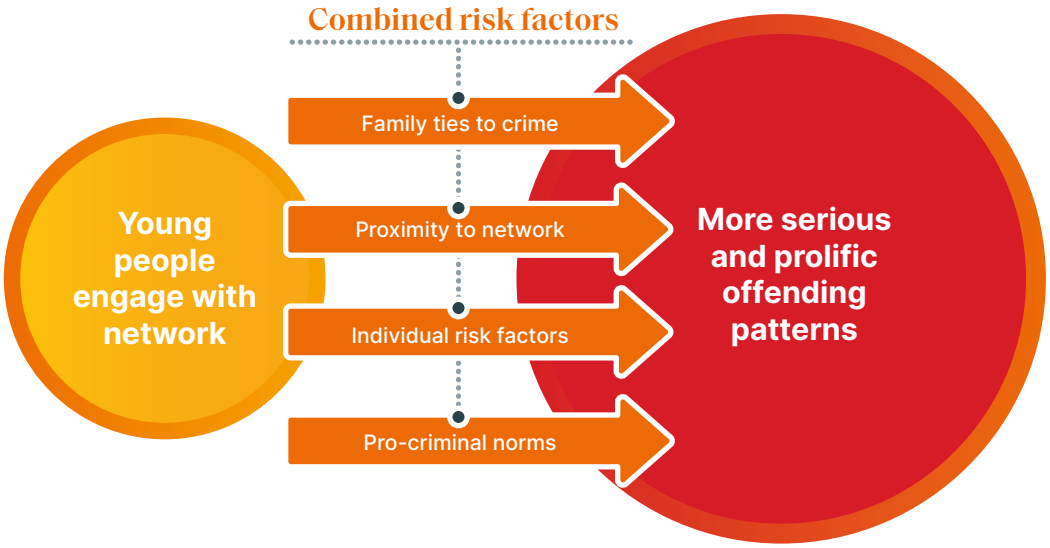


Figure 10: Combined risk factors leading to more serious and prolific offending patterns

[66] Coded as family risks in NVivo with 406 coded references
[67] Coded as clusters in NVivo with 220 coded references
[68] Coded as individual risks in NVivo with 252 coded references
[69] Coded as cultural risks in NVivo with 328 coded references

3.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Family ties to crime

For this research, we defined family ties to crime as influences from within the family (parents/siblings) that supported criminal behaviour (see Table 14 in Appendix 2 for full classification). In each network, respondents described how parents, siblings and the extended family of network members were involved in criminal activity at various points and this may have influenced those on the network map to become involved and stay involved in crime. Network 1, for example, was described by respondents as a family-based network with parents, siblings and extended family members involved in crime together. Garda 11, for example, suggested that older family members influenced younger members to become involved and stay involved in 'the family business'. Table 12 presents the number in each network that Garda respondents highlighted as having family members involved in criminal activity. The analysis indicates that on average 3 in 4 network members had family ties to crime. With regard to minors (under the age of 18), of whom there were nine in total, 2 in 3 had family ties to crime.

Table 12: Family ties to crime per network

Network	Network members with family ties to crime	Total with ties	Of these that were under 18
1	B46, B55, B54, B56	4 of 4	1 (B54)
2	B11, B7, B12, B5	4 of 5	1 (B12)
3	B21, B20, B10	3 of 5	1 (B10)
4	B34, B33, B36, B35	4 of 7	3 (B34, B35, B36)
TOTALS		15 of 21	6 (of 9)

In the family-based network, Network 1, respondents suggested that parents, B46 and B55, actively encouraged their children and extended family members to commit crime. This family influence was described as having a long-term effect on young people's criminal trajectories, with Garda 21 highlighting the potential outcome: 'This is a generational thing and will continue to be a generational thing'. In Networks 2, 3 and 4, a combination of parents, brothers and uncles influenced network members in their continued and sustained engagement in crime. The analysis suggests that intelligence[70] also linked family members from different areas. For example, B29 in Area D, an extended family member of Network 1, was linked (by PULSE intelligence links) to B44, an extended family member of Network 1 in Area A. The evidence suggests that families with ties to crime were present in all areas of the Bluetown map. A particular concentration of individuals with family ties to crime was present in Area A and younger family members were described as learning from parents, brothers or uncles while being encouraged to commit crime. In conclusion and based on Garda observations, the findings suggest that in Bluetown family ties to crime were linked with young network members developing more serious and prolific offending patterns across all networks.

[70] Intelligence links were not included on the Greentown map. The use of intelligence links therefore represents a new addition to the replication studies. Intelligence links refer to incidents deemed sufficiently important for the observing Garda to record.

3.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Proximity to a network of offending peers

We defined proximity to a network of offending peers as clusters of individuals living within close geographical distance of each other and involved in common criminal enterprise. Respondents identified clusters of offenders in certain areas as an issue in all four areas of the network map. In Network 1, family and extended relatives lived in the same concentrated geographical area. Networks 2, 3 and 4 were described as existing in areas where young and prolific offenders grew up and lived close to one another in similar housing estates. In addition to family influence, the analysis suggests that network members, in particular regarding Networks 2, 3 and 4, had formed groups with a common purpose which operated together for financial gain through criminal enterprise. Garda respondents described these networks as having a level of cohesion based around their locality where 'they'd all stick together' (Garda 2) and were like 'a band of brothers' (Garda 11).

Garda respondents noted that areas of Bluetown were difficult to access and difficult to police. In Network 1, for example, Garda 12 noted that family members were 'all living quite like next door to each other, at the back [of the area]'. Networks 2, 3 and 4 operated in specific areas of Bluetown with members starting out by committing various street-level offences and then advancing to property crime (Networks 2 and 3) or drugs (Network 4). All Garda respondents (n = 21) identified that clusters of co-offending individuals were in operation in Bluetown. Over half the respondents (12/21) identified that proximity to other offenders was a contributing factor in network members developing more serious and prolific offending patterns across all networks.[71]

All Garda respondents (n = 21) identified that clusters of co-offending individuals were in operation in Bluetown.

3.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Individual risk factors

We defined individual risk factors as factors that may have increased vulnerability and susceptibility to criminal behaviour; for example, impulsive and chaotic behaviour, lack of empathy, school dropout and alcohol or drug misuse. All 21 Garda respondents indicated that Bluetown's network members experienced various combinations of risk factors; for example, parental instability, drug use, antisocial behaviour and exclusion from mainstream society. Where school was mentioned, network members were excluded at an early age, on reduced timetables or involved in alternative education. Where there was educational attainment, Garda respondents reported that it was minimal; for example, 'some of them might get to Junior Cert level' (Garda 11).

Garda respondents described network members as having numerous previous offences and referrals to the Garda Diversion Programme. Garda 1 suggested that detention was viewed as a badge of honour among some young people in Bluetown: 'oh I got a three-month sentence, it doesn't faze them'. Respondents suggested that regardless of any intervention, some young people were returning to a community where criminality was commonplace. In the households of network members, respondents indicated that alcoholism (Network 1), drug use (Networks 2 and 4) and domestic violence (Networks 1 and 3) were presenting issues. In addition, respondents suggested that parents and guardians of network members, themselves having experienced adversity, struggled to support their children.

'oh I got a three-month sentence, it doesn't faze them' (Garda 1)

[71] Gardaí 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21.

3.2.4 Sub-theme 4: Pro-criminal norms

We defined pro-criminal norms as the influence of cultural context and any items referring to an individual's neighbourhood or community that may negatively influence their belief system or adversely limit their worldview in relation to crime. Respondents suggested that criminality, in the areas represented on the Bluetown network map, was normalised and crime was seen as a more realistic career path for some young people. This perception of offending and criminal behaviour as normal was considered by respondents to negatively facilitate certain young people's crime patterns. The acceptance of criminality within some families was described by respondents as an influencing factor. The analysis suggests that pro-criminal norms were linked to network and gang activity, with young people choosing crime over pro-social alternatives.

In Network 1, Garda respondents described criminality as an expectation. In other instances where parents were reported to actively discourage criminal activity, Garda respondents referred to the lure of the gang and the normality of offending in certain areas as a catalyst for network engagement.[72] This was particularly evident in Networks 2, 3 and 4, where burglary, robbery and drugs were seen as ways of making money and held a legitimacy over pro-social alternatives. In these networks, Gardaí described network members as starting out by committing smaller offences and advancing to more serious crime with few repercussions from parents, guardians or the community. Respondents suggested that drug use and drug dealing were normalised in areas where networks operated. In particular, Network 4 was described as having drugs at the core of the members' everyday lives. All 21 respondents referred to pro-criminal norms within Bluetown that negatively influenced those on the network maps.

In Network 1, Garda respondents described criminality as an expectation.

Summary

In this section we have presented evidence that despite the networks in Bluetown being individually distinctive, young network members shared common risk factors that were linked to the development of more serious and prolific offending patterns from a Garda respondent perspective. A number of combined risk factors – family ties to crime, proximity to a network of offending peers, individual risk factors and pro-criminal norms – were presented as sub-themes following thematic analysis of the data. The young people that displayed these combined risks factors were described by Garda respondents as more deeply entrenched and at higher risk of continued offending, with less chance of finding a way out.

[72] As evidenced in the case profiles in Finding 1

3.3 Finding 3

In Bluetown, criminal network strength and stability was enhanced by the quality of 'trust' in relationships between members and influenced by fear and intimidation.

In this section we outline how each of the four networks contained relationships with different levels of strength between members. Thematic analysis suggests that a stronger relationship between members, with a deeper level of trust, contributed to the stability of the network[73] and may have contributed to young people's more serious and prolific offending patterns. In addition, Gardaí described the presence of fear and intimidation in some instances and the analysis suggests that this may have also enhanced network strength and stability. Figure 11 illustrates the strength and stability of the networks in Bluetown from the analysis, moving from the least stable and strong, Network 2 (peer-based), to the most stable and strong, Network 1 (family-based). This analysis is based on Garda perspectives.

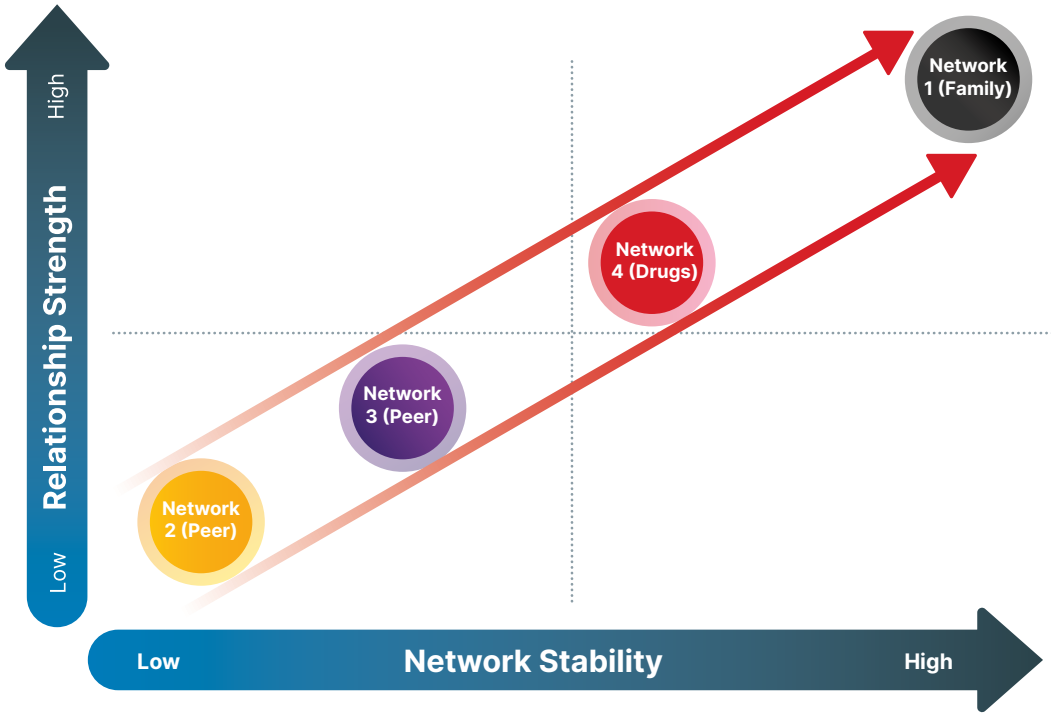


Figure 11: Network position from low strength and stability to high.

[73] This finding resonates with other commentary (for example, see Redmond, 2015; Grund and Morselli, 2016).

3.3.1 Strength and stability in Network 1

In Figure 11, we present Network 1 as the most robust in terms of relationship strength and network stability. Within this family-based network, bonds were perceived by respondents as stronger and more stable, and there was a deeper meaning and deeper level of trust between members. This network trumped other peer-based networks in terms of strength, stability and longevity. Garda respondents noted that Network 1 had existed for a number of generations in the area.[74] The network centred on the patriarch of the family, B46, who controlled a group of trusted family members. The delegation of tasks was controlled by the head of the family with reference to this feature being a traditional characteristic of the network. The grandfather in the family was referred to as the previous head of the family and now that responsibility rested with B46; and his sons, B56 and B54, were considered the natural heirs.[75]

Garda 11 described how B46 had 'always been around, as long as I've been here anyways … And he would have sons, nephews, sons-in-law and basically they would carry out burglaries nationwide since I've been here for the last 12 years and they'd be quite successful at it too.' This stability seemed unsurprising to Garda respondents, with reference made to the network's tight circle being hard to infiltrate.[76] Garda 11 explained this in terms of difficulty in policing: 'it's very hard to keep an eye on who is going where and what's going where because they're just so interlinked and interconnected'. Respondents suggested that a feature of their tight network and strong family relationships was that only certain members were central to decisions; for example, the eldest son, B56, was now trusted with controlling network activities and had 'taken up the mantle' for the family.[77] Respondents suggested that B54, a younger brother, was looking at what his brother did and was 'getting involved in it' with reference to this being 'a vicious cycle' (Garda 13). Extended family members, B43, B44, B45, B47, B48, B53, were all trusted members that committed crime for the family, resulting in a high level of crime with a low level of detection: 'for every burglary we catch them there's eight they're getting away with' (Garda 11).

3.3.2 Networks 2 and 3: Lower levels of trust, weaker networks

In contrast to Network 1, Networks 2 and 3 consisted of co-offending relationships that were born out of proximity and certain risk factors (see Finding 2) that led to more serious and prolific offending patterns. However, these connections were weaker and centred on peer relationships and criminal enterprise, in contrast to stronger relationships between trusted family members. The proceeds of crime in these networks was described by respondents as being spent on items for instant gratification, for example drugs and alcohol. At the time of the interviews, Network 2 had mostly broken up and, as presented in the case profile analysis in Finding 1, three of five members were incarcerated at the time of interviews. Garda 14 additionally suggested that in Network 2 the members' loyalty began to wane when they were faced with the prospect of long prison sentences.

[74] Garda 21, Garda 12.
[75] Garda 6, Garda 21.
[76] Garda 11, Garda 12.
[77] Garda 1, Garda 12.

In Network 3, despite commitment to silence beyond the group that helped sustain the network, instability arose when an internal split led to B20 stopping all associations with B21, B17 and B10 following a disagreement over the proceeds of a crime. However, Network 3 had adapted and Garda respondents indicated that at the time of the interviews, B10, B17, B21 and an individual now in the UK were suspected of becoming involved in the sale and supply of drugs in their area. Referring to drug connections, Garda 20 suggested that, 'they do rub shoulders with other older lads … someone has to control it, although the younger lads might be the face of what's going on'. Garda 7 suggested that, at the time of the interviews, the group was becoming more established and had their own 'runners' or younger people from the community doing minor drug dealing and holding drugs for them. This emerging feature arguably refocused the group and had led to them becoming a more organised and structured entity than Network 2, as indicated in Figure 11.

3.3.3 Network 4: Drugs hierarchy, a more organised structure

Network 4 contained members that were identified by respondents as a close-knit group of friends. They were linked through burglary detections. Although not illustrated on the Bluetown map,[78] drug dealing was identified by Garda respondents as the central feature, with descriptions of the recruitment of young community members into loose hierarchical drugs structures. They were governed by loyalty to each other and compliance with intentions by G24, an outside influence not on the network map. Those on the map were viewed as retail-level street dealers, the most vulnerable and most at risk of being caught, but 'would never let anything slip' (Garda 1). Respondents indicated that this group were disciplined, with the suggestion that G24, the identified leader, was feared in the community and among the network members that worked for him.

The analysis suggested that this element of organisation and external influence controlled members' behaviour and compelled them to stay involved in selling drugs locally. G24 was described by Garda 16 as the controlling influence of this area and the network. He controlled the drug dealing; local residents knew this and did not interfere out of fear of repercussions. Garda 16 also suggested that he was linked to other areas of the map and these links had a wider connection to drugs networks in the region. His drugs network was described as being firmly embedded in the community, difficult to shift or infiltrate. This closed group trusted each other's silence and held the perception that any punishment would be far more serious if instigated by G24 rather than the state (Garda 16). These factors are reflected in Figure 11, with Network 4 presented as a stronger and more stable network than Networks 2 and 3 but not as strong and stable as the family-based Network 1.

[78] The network maps were based on offences committed by at least two individuals

3.3.4 Fear and intimidation

Fear and intimidation also increased the strength and stability of networks in Bluetown according to Gardaí. In the areas where Networks 3 and 4 operated it was indicated that fear and intimidation were used to try to control the community and its residents. Garda respondents viewed this as a normal feature of these networks, with Garda 1 suggesting that residents did not report criminal activity as they were afraid of the individuals in the networks. Some members in Networks 3 and 4 had a perceived status of power. Young people in the area connected those in the networks to older individuals with a feared reputation and this gave them power over their peers in the local community. For example, in relation to Network 3, Garda 15 explained, 'They would very much have a reputation where the other youths that lived in the estate and even there could be of a similar age over a hundred youths maybe in the overall estate would be afraid, fearful of them.'

In addition, within Network 4 and its area of operation, G24 was described as having a higher level of power and influence and an ability to control the behaviour of other network members by fear and intimidation. Respondents suggested that he utilised his perceived status to keep network members in line and silent if apprehended. This ensured a stronger and more stable drugs network, with little resistance from the community and little hope of being infiltrated by Gardaí, 'So now like he will cycle his bike around the estate, he's very much in everybody's view, everybody knows who he is. And that's his intimidation, that's his control' (Garda 16). The analysis suggests that this fear and intimidation was used to control and coerce and helped to sustain Network 4.

Summary

This section outlines how each of the four networks contained relationships with different levels of trust between members. From the perspective of Garda respondents, a deeper level of trust was linked to network strength and stability. Networks with higher levels of trust, for example family ties, were stronger and more stable and this enhanced young network members' engagement in criminal activity. In addition, fear and intimidation were linked to enhanced network strength and stability. Feared networks were stronger, were more stable and existed for longer in areas of Bluetown.

Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

Conclusion

In this chapter, we present conclusions from the Bluetown case study. We use the following headings to describe the key learning and examine whether engagement in a criminal network contributed to young people's more serious and prolific offending patterns: (4.1) Bluetown findings and the research questions; (4.2) Strengths and limitations; and (4.3) Summary.

4.1 Bluetown findings and the research questions

The Bluetown study aimed to identify, from a Garda perspective, the factors that influenced young people's engagement and retention within a criminal network, and whether engagement with the network influenced young people's patterns of criminal activity. The current methodology, a case study approach, precluded causal inferences; the study is therefore exploratory and formative. As we presented in Finding 1, the Bluetown criminal network map, disclosed by PULSE detection and intelligence data, represented four different and distinctive parts of the Bluetown sub-district. In these areas there were four distinct networks in operation for the period 2014–2015. Network 1 was-family based and hierarchical in nature, with Networks 2 and 3 grounded in peer relationships within their locality. Network 4 was described as having a hierarchical drugs structure.

Finding 2 suggested that in Bluetown, each network contained members with family connections to crime and a combination of individual risk factors, who lived in close proximity to a network of offending peers with pro-criminal norms. Finding 3 suggested that the different networks contained relationships with different levels of trust between members. These differing relationships affected network strength and stability. In addition, findings suggest that some of the networks had developed in particular localities for sustained periods. Garda respondents suggested that the young people involved in the criminal networks had started with minor offences and then became involved in more serious property crime such as burglary in Networks 1, 2 and 3, and drug dealing in Network 4. These findings, based on Garda perspectives, suggest that engagement in a criminal network in Bluetown contributed to young people's more serious and prolific offending patterns for a significant number of network members.

4.2 Strengths and limitations

It is important to note that the findings throughout this study are based on third-party observations and perspectives, albeit, where possible, supported with reference to events.[79] A particular strength of the Twinsight methodology is its ability to capture in-depth knowledge in addition to quantitative statistical data provided by the network map. While Bluetown was ranked first on the list of Garda sub-districts for the number of young people (under 18 years) involved in atypical crimes (burglary and drugs for sale and supply), the analysis of this large urban Garda sub-district presented some challenges. As a result of the large area covered in the sub-district, Garda respondents were limited in their knowledge of all areas and thus focused on offenders in certain areas over others. Respondents noted the size of the area covered by the Bluetown criminal network map in comparison to their own catchment or patrol area, and sometimes gave a more overarching picture of offenders they were familiar with in each area. While detail was encouraged in interviews, some Garda respondents – those policing another area, for example – were unable to give in-depth details of other areas. This led us to refocus our analysis on a number of Gardaí that we deemed to have more in-depth knowledge of a particular area over others (over 15 mentions).

Nonetheless, the Twinsight methodology facilitated some respondents, those with long-term experience in the area, to examine the network from a longitudinal perspective. Respondents were able to evidence contexts, quoting specific incidents and interactions both before and after the period that the network map reflected, 2014–2015. This practice wisdom provided in-depth understanding of the individual members and their family contexts and the nuances of the networks in Bluetown, despite limiting the input to those who had particular knowledge of one area over others. For example, Area A on the network map contained members B41 to B56 (Network 1), with seven Garda respondents that had an in-depth knowledge of the area (over 15 mentions). Thus, the analysis focused on these respondents as a priority for that area.

In common with Greentown, some limitations in relation to the use of PULSE data to construct the original network map should be taken into consideration. The Bluetown network map was the result of an artificial construction of PULSE data by the Garda Síochána Analysis Service. Despite possible limitations relating to the network being an artificial construct, Bluetown Garda respondents gave an average rating of 8.36 out of 10 for the accuracy of the map.[80] PULSE data, originally logged by local Gardaí, were compiled by the Garda Síochána Analysis Service and the study findings were based on the case profile and thematic analysis of Garda respondents' narratives of network members, their contexts and the dynamics between them. The focus on Gardaí may have contributed to the occurrence of institutional bias. In addition, at the initial briefing meeting[81] the research team informed Gardaí that the study focused on young people, their contexts and their interactions with other individuals on the network. This may also have influenced Garda narratives. However, despite the study's focus on the younger members of the network, the intergenerational nature of offending was evident, with older family members also involved in some networks. In addition, a data collection procedure that interviewed Gardaí with diverse roles and perspectives and aimed to ground narratives in specific incidences was adopted to minimise the occurrence of such bias. Triangulating findings with input from actual network members, family, community members and other professionals may strengthen the evidence base by providing a more direct perspective, though such a study would present many logistical and ethical challenges.

[79] Limitations associated with the Twinsight method are outlined in detail in the original Greentown report (Redmond, 2016).
[80] This rating out of 10 was given at the beginning of Garda interviews.
[81] See methods section in Appendix 1.

The PULSE crime data indicate that the young people in the Bluetown criminal networks were involved in atypical crime. The current study aimed to identify from a Garda perspective whether engagement in a criminal network influenced the young people's offending patterns. This research would benefit from a comparative follow-up study to investigate if the young people involved in networks in 2014–2015 continued offending and at what level, for example by comparing PULSE data for the young people found to be embedded in the networks versus those who were not at a later period.

Finally, as criminal transactions between individual members were central to the concept of the network construction, we did not use individual detections on the original network map. This results in a visual underestimation of the occurrence of drug-related crimes.[82] Red coloured links[83] were used in the original Greentown and Redtown network maps where common drugs for sale or supply offences were detected. These did not feature in the PULSE data in Bluetown for this period (in particular in relation to Network 4).

4.3 Summary

The original Greentown study (Redmond, 2016) was distinctive in its design of the innovative Twinsight methodology to facilitate the examination of criminal networks using a qualitative approach and capturing the expert knowledge of the local police force. The findings from the original Greentown study identified the importance of taking a network approach to the examination of the factors that may contribute to young people's more serious and prolific offending. This replication study strengthens this position; it highlights both the replicability of the Twinsight methodology in different contexts and its contribution of novel knowledge in the area of youth justice.

In Greentown, one criminal network was identified that had a hierarchical structure and a dominant crime family at its centre. In Bluetown, there were four distinct networks. Network 1 was family-based and hierarchical in nature, with Networks 2 and 3 grounded in peer relationships and their locality. Network 4 was described as having a hierarchical drugs structure. All four networks in Bluetown contained relationships with different levels of trust between members, and this affected network strength and stability. Importantly and similarly to Greentown, the networks contained members with family connections to crime and involved young people with a combination of risk factors. In addition, in Network 1 and similarly to Greentown, close family relationships mitigated the ability of the young people involved to make their own decisions.

In Bluetown, Gardaí saw the combination of risk factors as important to young people developing more serious and prolific offending patterns. This finding complements the original Greentown report, which identifies particular properties that have a bearing on children's involvement in crime. However, not all young people that presented with the same risk factors in Bluetown's network engaged in more serious and prolific offending patterns. Respondents referred to some young people in Area D that seemed to be desisting from crime at the time of the interviews. Garda 10 described the situation of some young people that were linked by offences in that area as 'growing out of crime'. Redmond (2016) contains a full discussion on practice and policy implications, while Redmond (in progress) describes the practice and policy implications emanating from all Greentown-related studies (Greentown, Bluetown, Redtown and National Prevalence Study).

[82] This comes from private correspondence with a senior analyst in An Garda Síochána.
[83] See note in Appendix 1.

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Lifting the Lid on Bluetown

Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology

Initially we outline the key features of the methodology, then we describe the Twinsight methodology (2.1) aims of the research (2.2) and data analysis strategy (2.3) in detail.

Twinsight methodology

We replicated the Twinsight methodology that Redmond (2016) specifically developed for the original Greentown study. First, we explain how we selected the replication site (2.1.1). Second, we outline how the Garda Analysis Service constructed the network maps (2.1.2); finally, we describe our data collection procedure.

Selection of replication case study locations

We selected the replication case study locations based on the sampling strategy taken by the Greentown study. An Garda Síochána Analysis Service ranked all Garda sub-districts based on detections of Burglary and Drugs for sale and supply offences committed by young people[84] during 2014–2015 as recorded in the PULSE system. Table 13 illustrates the top six ranked Garda sub-districts, which have been anonymised, together with the total number of burglary and drugs for sale and supply detections for children during 2014–2015. The table also contains the proportion of the total number of offences per 1,000 children in that Garda sub-district.

Garda management from the anonymised locations, Bluetown (Dublin sub-district) and Redtown (provincial sub-district), which were ranked first and third respectively, accepted an invitation from the research team to participate in the replication study.

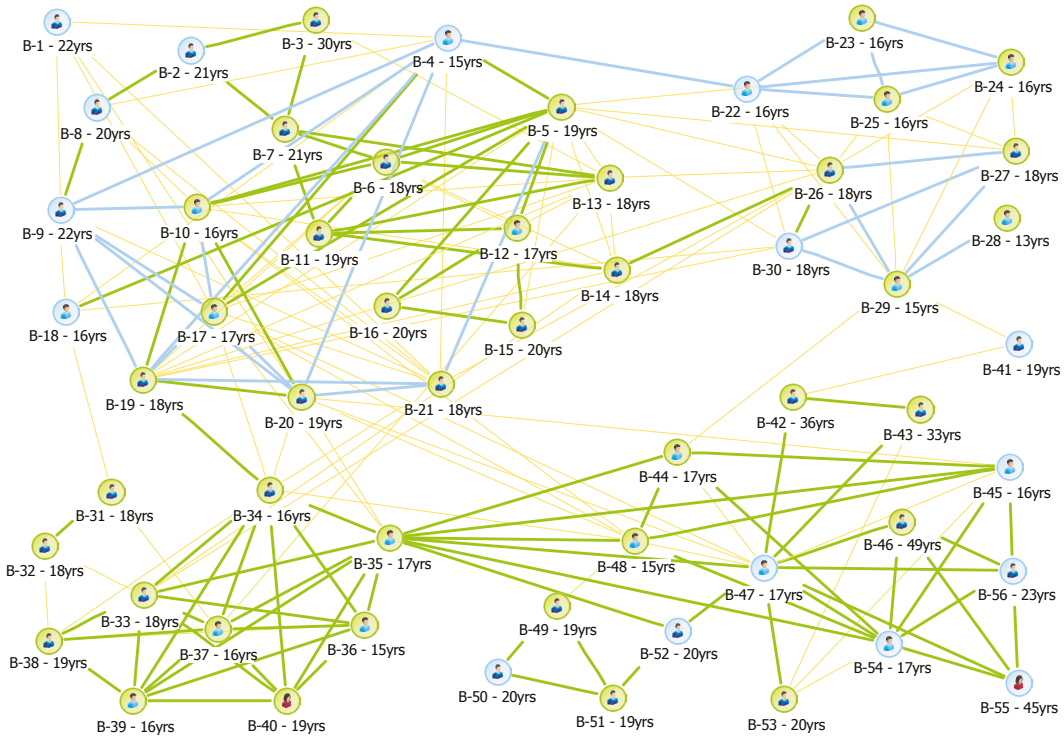
Table 13: Ranking of Garda sub-districts (2014–2015) based on detections for burglary and drugs for sale or supply offences by young people under 18 years with Bluetown highlighted.

Ranking	Sub-District	Burglary	Drugs Sale/ Supply	Total	Burg/Drugs Per 1000 12-17yrs
1	Bluetown	234	8	242	35
2	Greentown	112	0	112	32
3	Redtown	78	7	85	31
4	Dublin X	57	7	64	20
5	Dublin Y	61	0	61	29
6	Midlands X	56	3	59	35

[84] Under the age of 18 years.

Construction of the network map

The Bluetown network map, based on 2014–2015 PULSE data, was constructed by An Garda Síochána Analysis Service (see Figure 12) based on co-offending relationships.[85]



Each **node**[86] (see Figure 13) represents an individual network member with identifying information as follows:

- a unique identifier number: B1 to B56
- age in years[87]
- gender: red figureheads represented the female members; blue figureheads represented the male members.
- location of current address[88] is represented by background colour – light green background represents individuals with an address within the Bluetown sub-district; blue background represents an individual with an address outside the sub-district.[89]

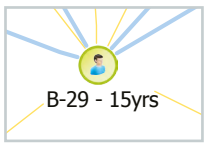


Figure 13: Node

[85] Co-offending relationships refer to specific criminal incidents in which two or more individuals were detected together.
[86] A node is a figurehead that represents an individual on the network map.
[87] As of 31 December 2015.
[88] As of 31 December 2015.
[89] Figure 13 is a node representing B29, who on 31 December 2015 was a 15-year-old male with an address within the Bluetown Garda sub-district.

Colour links (co-offending lines that link the nodes/individuals) indicate that the linked individuals were detected for at least one specific criminal incident as follows.

Green link:
burglary offences, see Figure 14

Orange link:
intelligence record[90], see Figure 15.



Figure 14: Burglary links

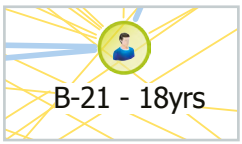


Figure 15: Intelligence links

Note: **Red link** – used in the original Greentown and Redtown network map where common drugs for sale or supply offences were detected – did not feature in the PULSE data in Bluetown for this period.[91]

Data collection

Using the Twinsight methodology (Redmond, 2016), two PDF versions of the Bluetown network maps were produced by An Garda Síochána Analysis Services: a researcher's version and a Garda version. The researcher's version (Figure 12) was anonymised.[92] The Garda respondent's version additionally contained the name of each network member.[93] This ensured a comprehensive yet confidential discussion during interviews with Bluetown Gardaí, and afforded protection to case-sensitive data. Prior to interviews, the network maps were reviewed by local Garda management to ensure they were an adequate reflection of detections for the specified criminal offences in the area during 2014–2015.

We conducted an initial on-site briefing with the Bluetown Gardaí who had agreed to be interviewed for the study. The aim of this briefing was to outline the purpose of the study and ensure that the Garda respondents were familiar with the network map. Prior to the interviews, the Garda respondents were encouraged to discuss the contents of the map with each other and to think about specific incidences relating to individual network members who featured on the map, their contexts and interactions between the individuals. This was done to ensure that the Garda respondents would provide rich data grounded in evidence.[94,95]

We conducted interviews with 21 Gardaí based in Bluetown who had a working knowledge of the network.[96] At our request, Garda respondents varied in terms of their ranks, age, gender and roles (for example, juvenile liaison officers, community officers, regular, specialist crime, drugs, and intelligence).[97] This ensured that the dataset[98] contained a number of diverse within-organisation perspectives permitting in-depth insights into a wider range of contextual viewpoints (home life, community life, specific offences, etc.).

[90] Intelligence links were not included on the original Greentown map. The use of intelligence links therefore represents a new addition to the replication studies. Intelligence links refer to incidents deemed sufficiently important for the observing Garda to record.
[91] Although no common drug sale links were detected in Bluetown, Twinsight surfaced a narrative around elements of this (see Chapter 3).
[92] The researcher's version contained no personal identifying information.
[93] In line with the original study, to ensure anonymity and confidentially, the Gardaí's version remained under the protection of An Garda Síochána and was at no time visible to the research team. The unique identifiers were used to refer to specific network members throughout the interviews.
[94] It was considered that grounding the interview discussion in specific incidences and events would minimise opinion-based answers and mitigate (albeit to a limited extent) responses based only on an organisational perspective.
[95] To avoid the risks of the development of consensus prior to interview, Garda respondents were informed of the importance of diverse perspectives on specific incidences and individuals.
[96] To capture expert on-the-ground tacit knowledge of the network.
[97] To maintain the anonymity of the respondents, a table of their attributes has not been presented.
[98] 'Dataset' refers to the 21 transcribed interviews.

Participation was voluntary and all Gardaí provided informed consent prior to interview. We conducted the interviews in November/December 2017 in a venue that facilitated confidential discussions. The interview schedule facilitated a close examination of the network at various levels: individual, transactions between individuals, sub-group activities and the network as a whole. Interviews were semi-structured in order to allow the researcher to probe areas of interest to the research question. Interviews were audio recorded and lasted on average 54 minutes.[99]

The interview schedule facilitated the close examination of the network at various levels of granularity: individual, transactions between individuals, sub-group activities and the network as a whole.

Data analysis strategy

We transcribed audio-recorded interviews and imported the transcripts into NVivo software. The analysis consisted of two parts: case profile analysis and thematic analysis.

Case profile analysis

We developed case profile analysis to maximise insights provided by the Twinsight methodology (Redmond, 2016). As such, case profile analysis provided a thorough analysis of individual network members and the context of their engagement, retention and/or possible exit from the Bluetown Network. We used the NVivo software to link paragraphs of narrative data to an individual network member throughout the dataset. We then manually checked each compiled case profile for accuracy. Following the original Twinsight methodology, we used two quantitative diagnostic screens – first five mentioned and frequency of mentions – to aid in the selection of the network members whom the respondents considered important, for further in-depth analysis.

We developed case profile analysis to maximise insights provided by the Twinsight methodology.

First five mentioned: We asked each respondent to identify five individuals on the map who they felt were important and were happy to talk about during their interview. We then totalled these across all respondents in order to provide a first five mentioned score for each network member. This process identified individuals who were salient to the respondents.

Frequency of mentions: We totalled the number of paragraphs linked to each network member100 to provide a frequency of mentions score. This process identified individuals who were dominant within Garda narratives throughout the dataset[101] and was designed to offset peak-end bias.[102] The individual network members that featured in the top 20 of either first five mentioned or frequency of mentions rankings were the subject of further analysis. In Bluetown, additional members we adjudged to be important were also included.[103] Initially we compiled case profile summaries grounded in the data[104] that were then synthesised and aggregated with other key network members.

[99] 21 interviews lasted on average 53.61 minutes.
[100] NVivo software compiled all paragraphs that contained a specified unique identifier number.
[101] We used this tool to offset bias that may have arisen from the increased attention that may have been given to talked-about individuals or sensationalised behaviour which may contribute to a higher than warranted 'first five mentioned ' score.
[102] To avoid potential accessibility bias that may have arisen from 'talked-about' individuals due to sensationalised behaviour or behaviour that was memorable only because it was recent.
[103] As family influences were considered important to the research question, summaries were also written for family members who were closely linked to the top 20 ranked (in terms of first five mentions and frequency of mentions).
[104] The summaries were extract-heavy so that they clearly reflected Garda narratives.

Consequences of a large geographical catchment area: In Bluetown, a significantly larger geographical area (than Greentown and Redtown) was covered by the network map. This resulted in some Garda respondents that had greater levels of knowledge about certain locations (their catchment or patrol area). For the analysis, we determined that over 15 mentions of individuals in a particular area indicated more in-depth knowledge. Thus, we focused our analysis on the Garda narratives with over 15 mentions for a particular area. This determination was accommodated within the analytic strategy with the evidence from respondents who had this in-depth perspective emphasised.

Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a process that facilitates the identification of relationships and patterns across the dataset which are both meaningful and relevant to the research question. We interpreted and synthesized these patterns to form themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). We developed an 'a priori' coding framework (Carroll et al., 2011) based on the original Greentown coding categories (Redmond, 2015). This resulted in seven categories divided into 26 sub-categories. The framework also included an 'open' category to facilitate the coding of data that did not fit the 'a priori' categories (see Appendix 2 below for a full list of the categories and sub-categories). This approach provided a pragmatic solution to time-efficient and consistent coding between the two replication studies, Bluetown and Redtown.

Thematic analysis is a process that facilitates the identification of relationships and patterns across the dataset which are both meaningful and relevant to the research question.

We read the transcripts in their entirety to gain an overview of the entire dataset. To assure a systematic analysis of the dataset, using a constant comparison method (Glaser, 1965), transcripts were line-by-line coded to the a priori framework. To ensure internal reliability, three research team members initially coded the same transcript. We subsequently held extensive discussions to compare coding and any discrepancies. We agreed descriptions of each category (see Appendix 2). During analysis, we prioritised data grounded in evidence (direct corroborated observation of specific events). However, under certain conditions data provided by only one Garda were included.[105] Precedence was given to the quality of data (relevance to the research question) over the quantity (how many respondents said something) (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Where we observed conflicting narratives, (1) data that were evidenced by specific incidences were prioritised over data which were not, and (2) data that were provided by a Garda who had demonstrated in-depth knowledge of an individual/situation were prioritised over data provided by a Garda who had not. We wrote summaries for the sub-categories and we recorded patterns and relationships between the categories in memos.

We cross-referenced the summaries for the major categories (thematic analysis) and case profiles (case profile analysis) to ensure internal triangulation. This process facilitated theme development and synthesis of the findings. The data analysis process was iterative, repeatedly returning to the original text to ensure context, and reflective to mitigate the impact of researcher bias and views on the interpretation of the data. In addition, to ensure validity, meetings between team members took place throughout the analysis process where we discussed the coding framework, analysis, interpretations and theme development in detail.[106]

[105] This occurred where Gardaí had established substantial knowledge in this specific area within the interview.

[106] Although frequent team meetings occurred, different researchers took the lead on each individual case study. The lead researcher conducted coding, analysis and report writing to ensure a degree of separation between the studies (and minimise internal replication bias: see the introduction). Furthermore, the reflective and iterative nature of the coding, analysis and report writing also helped mitigate contamination of findings between studies.

Finally, we constructed reconfigured network maps based on the data analysis and presented initial findings to the Garda respondents in Bluetown.[107]

Strategy for reporting findings

We presented the findings relevant to the research questions. We used extracts from the dataset, which illustrate important arguments, throughout the findings.

To ensure a cohesive report, we limited referencing individual Garda respondents to direct quotes[108]. Garda expert opinion where relevant is occasionally presented; when this occurs it is highlighted within the findings. It is important to note that all findings presented are from the perspective of the Garda respondent and reflect their expert experiences on the ground.[109]

[107] Limitations to the methodology can be found in the discussion.
[108] We compiled initial extended summaries; these reference all respondents and can be accessed from the research team on request.
[109] All findings related to the analysis of interview data.

Appendix 2

Table 14: List of categories, sub-categories, descriptions and frequency of occurrence within the dataset

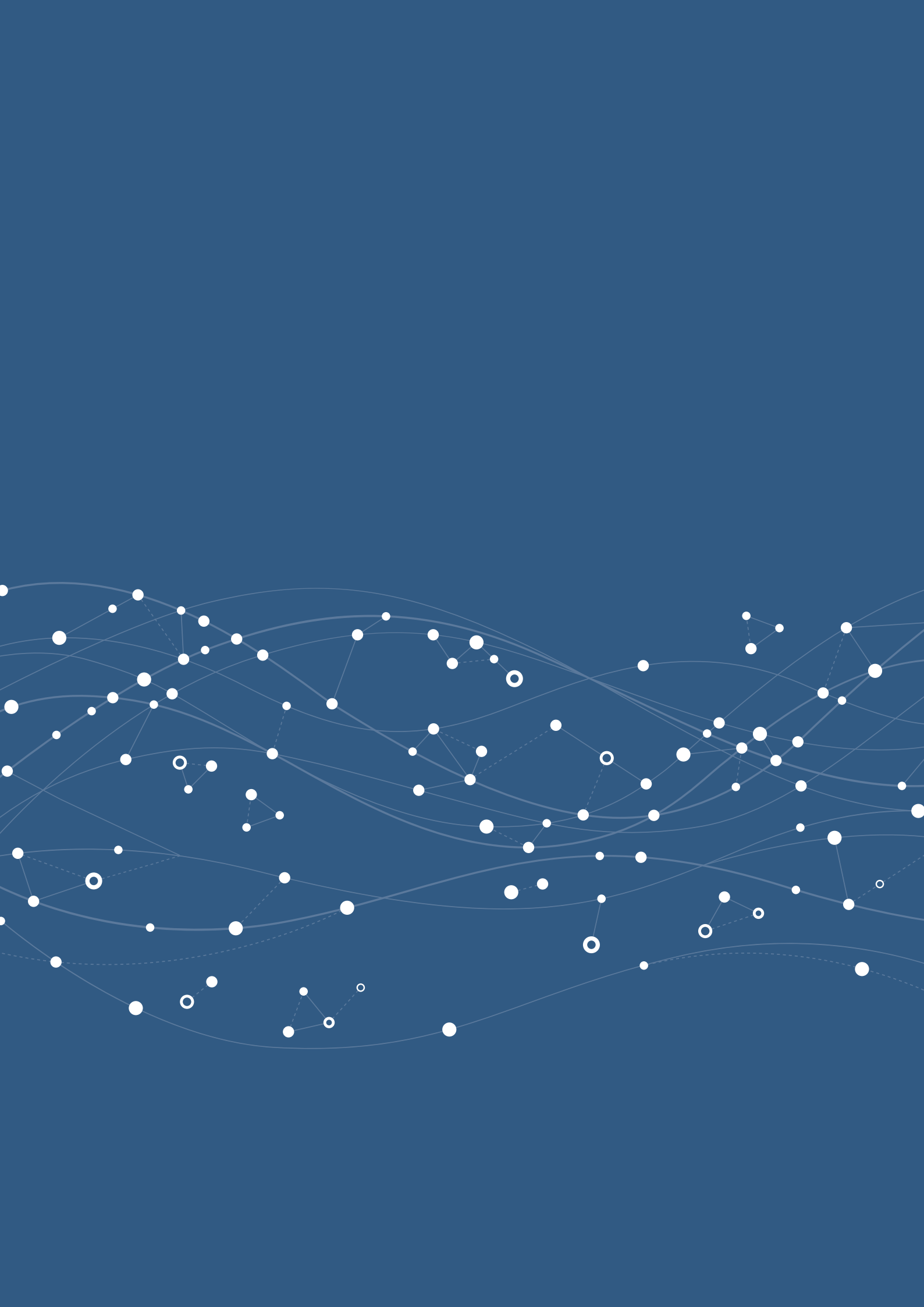
Category	Sub-category	Description	Node	No. of coded references
Risk/Protective factors	Individual	Personal attributes which may protect or increase vulnerability for criminal behaviour, for example lifestyle (drugs, alcohol/impulsivity/ chaotic/empathy/capacity/ intelligence/ masculinity/antisocial and pro-social behaviour/ school drop-outs/peers/romantic relationships	Risks	252
			Protectives	42
	Family context	Home life/influencers from within the family (parents/siblings) on criminal behaviour, for example family, criminality, domestic abuse, mental health or addictions, neglect, supervision, support, encouraging crime, not discouraging crime, norms	Risks (DV)	439
			Protectives	54
			Family relationship	98
	Cultural context	Responses that refer to the actors' mesosystem (neighbourhood, community) that may influence criminal behaviour, or limit their perspective/ worldview, for example norms/feasible alternatives. Also includes descriptions of the area	Risks	328
			Protectives	17
			Neutral	76
Networks	Evidence of crime organisation	Narrative suggesting organised crime/degree of pre-planning/collaboration/trust/control/ reprisals/punishment		100
	Pecking order	Narrative around status and power relationships (dynamics) in the context of crime (minims/little army) trust/value versus disposability		127
	Proprieties	Building and preserving the network, repeat behaviours, uniformities, trusting relationships, protecting the network members/concealing/ taking the rap		102
	Family brand	Family as a feature of a network/close bonds/ trust. Family reputation/front/myth etc.		67
	Clusters	Quasi-autonomous clusters within the networks, alliances of individuals		220
	Open system	Relationships with external networks, any reference to networks outside the confines of the map		185
Criminal activities	Drugs	References to illicit drugs	Evidence of use	68
			Evidence of sale/supply	105
	Burglary	References to burglary or other offence categories linked to burglary or attempted burglary events		194
	Robbery	References to robbery or other offence categories linked to robbery or attempted robbery events		93
	Other	Reference to any other offence categories		162
	Offending patterns	Escalation of crime and references to frequency and seriousness or de-escalation of crime and references to frequency and seriousness	Increase	53
			Decrease	45

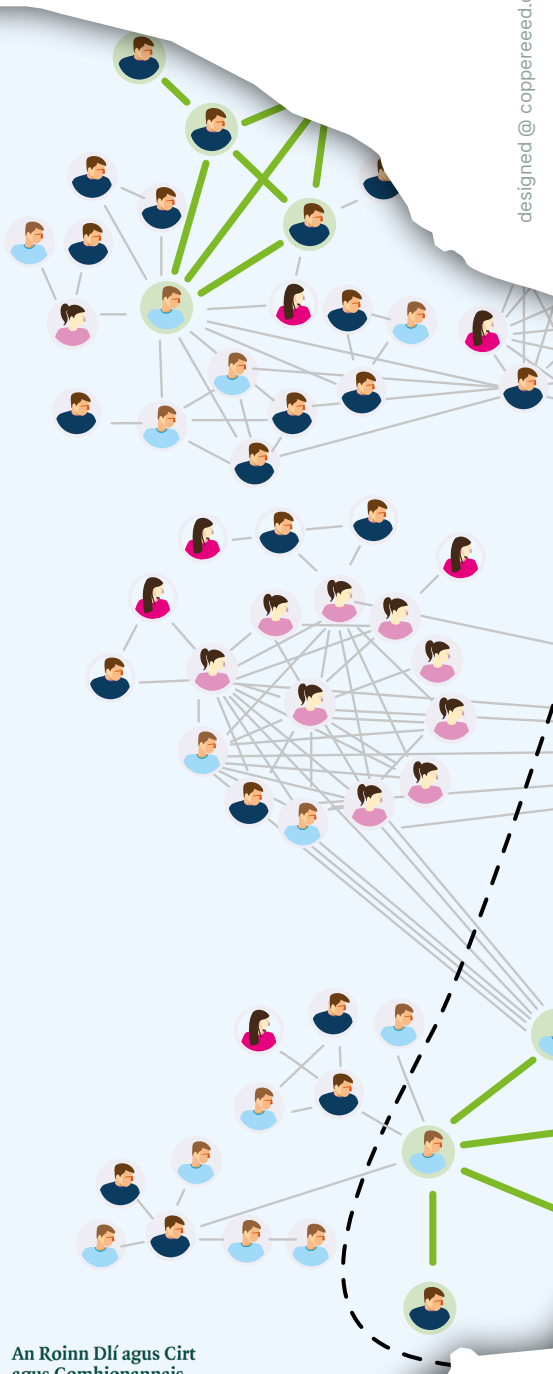
Category	Sub-category	Description	Node	No. of coded references
Dynamics	Pull	Factors that may have attracted actors to crime, access to lifestyle, status and motives for crime (to feed themselves/ buy drugs/status)		104
	Push	Interpersonal coercion, fear, intimidation and obligation	Actual violence	12
			Threatened violence	26
			Obligation	68
	Grooming	Narratives in relation to older adults' direct influence on youths to promote their criminal behaviour/compliance		92
	Agency	Processes of resilience, defiance against the network		4
	Current responses	Responses relating to procedures and solutions, i.e. a critique		244
Formal system	Network member Interactions with authorities	How the actors interact with authorities	Gaming	50
			Confrontations	28
	Suggested solutions	Looking forward: Identification of possible solutions		87
Open coding	Others	Doesn't fit within the a priori subthemes or warrants further coding/attention		13
Methodology	Methods	Responses relating to strengths and weakness of the network map. Any references to study methodology	Strengths	74
			Limitations	271
	First 5 mentions	Responses to 'identify five actors on the network you would like to talk about'		55
	Demographics (respondent)	Respondents' roles and progress through An Garda Síochána		29

Appendix 3

Table 15: Table of frequency of mentions for each of the top 20 ranked network members, which illustrates the number of times individual Gardaí (Blue 1, Blue 2 etc.) referred to each member.

Cases	Blue 1	Blue 2	Blue 3	Blue 4	Blue 5	Blue 6	Blue 7	Blue 8	Blue 9	Blue 10	Blue 11	Blue 12	Blue 13	Blue 14	Blue 15	Blue 16	Blue 17	Blue 18	Blue 19	Blue 20	Blue 21	Totals
B-29	4	0	0	9	21	21	0	16	21	26	6	0	0	21	11	1	29	0	15	0	10	**211**
B-21	27	9	0	0	2	11	33	7	0	0	12	1	0	0	10	2	0	51	0	19	9	**193**
B-11	1	0	1	27	29	8	13	0	6	0	6	0	0	39	4	12	12	0	7	8	8	**181**
B-19	38	0	2	31	16	0	26	1	0	0	11	1	0	12	0	3	0	0	0	22	9	**172**
B-07	6	28	1	1	3	0	0	4	14	0	3	0	0	3	13	1	0	40	1	12	1	**132**
B-34	13	7	14	0	12	12	8	8	0	0	22	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	15	4	1	**119**
B-37	1	0	20	0	2	16	15	0	0	0	29	1	0	0	2	13	1	0	15	3	0	**118**
B-06	24	1	0	7	4	1	12	7	0	0	2	0	0	8	2	10	0	4	7	19	9	**117**
B-46	3	10	0	7	0	8	0	0	0	0	30	36	16	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	**116**
B-17	20	0	1	4	3	5	25	2	0	0	7	1	0	2	11	2	2	6	0	21	1	**113**
B-12	13	1	14	0	4	9	28	0	0	0	3	0	0	13	1	2	1	0	7	8	8	**112**
B-20	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	4	0	6	18	2	9	22	0	0	0	**103**
B-33	3	0	20	0	16	0	3	5	0	0	23	0	0	0	2	11	0	0	15	3	1	**102**
B-10	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	3	11	1	6	29	0	0	0	**98**
B-55	0	17	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	37	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	**89**
B-36	4	1	1	0	13	7	10	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	06	0	0	10	1	4	**78**
B-35	5	1	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	37	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	4	2	16	**76**
B-05	14	7	2	0	4	9	4	5	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	8	8	**71**
B-30	2	0	0	4	10	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	0	6	0	1	1	7	10	15	4	**66**
B-32	0	0	0	11	0	6	13	0	0	0	21	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	2	1	**64**





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